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A

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

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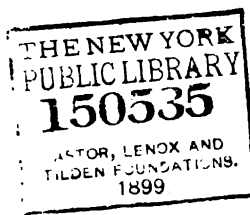
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"When he first devoted himself to the Public Service, he considered how he should render himself fit for it; and this he did by endeavouring to discover what it was that gave this country the rank it holds in the world. He found that its prosperity and dignity arose principally, if not solely, from two sources; its Constitution and Commerce. Both these he spared no study to understand, and no endeavour to support."

Mr. Burke's Speech at Bristol, in 1774.

LONDON:

MDCCCXXI.



ROY WEN
QUEN
VRADEL

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A wish has been very generally expressed, that a Life of Mr. Huskisson should be undertaken, which might embrace in a single view all the changes and improvements which have taken place of late years, in the Commercial Policy, not only of Great Britain, but of other countries, and which might exhibit the progress, and explain the advantages, of a System with which his name has become, as it were, identified.

But to the adequate performance of such a task many obstacles presented themselves. Although the belief in the wisdom of clinging to the prohibitive system is gradually yielding to the experience of the benefits arising from an altered policy, nevertheless the disposition to look back upon that system with complacency or regret, is still so rooted, both in this country and on the continent, that any attempt to defend the sagacity, or to prove the necessity, of departing from it, might appear to solicit a controversy, which it is far from the intention of this work to provoke.

There is still another objection to entering largely, at the present moment, upon a review of the policy, which has latterly guided the commercial legislation of this country. Although England has proclaimed her recognition of the principle of commercial freedom,

a long course of contrary policy offers innumerable impediments to its immediate and universal application. In spite of all the efforts of Mr. Huskisson, his System has, therefore, been hitherto but imperfectly carried into execution, and the results of it still more imperfectly developed. The time, then, is evidently not yet arrived, when justice could be done either to its merits, or to the Policy of those who advocated it.

The sole object of the present Memoir is to correct the many erroneous statements which have been industriously disseminated respecting the late Mr. Huskisson, and to lay before the public a simple, but authentic, narrative, drawn from incontrovertible sources, of a life, nearly the whole of which was devoted to the service of the country, and which was so awfully cut short, at a time when its value and importance were most deeply felt and appreciated by men of all parties.

Fully alive to his own incompetency to do justice to his subject, the Author of this sketch trusts, nevertheless, that the nature of the materials to which he has had access,—an earnest endeavour to adhere strictly and impartially to the truth,—and the advantage of an intimate acquaintance of many years with Mr. Huskisson, may, in some degree, be thought to have compensated for the absence of other and higher qualifications.

JULY 1831.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR.

WILLIAM HUSKISSON was descended from a gentleman's family of moderate fortune, which had been long settled in Staffordshire. His ancestors, for several generations, had resided upon their own property, pursuing no profession, and belonged to that class of small landed proprietors, or country gentlemen, then so numerous, but which is now become nearly extinct.

His father, William, was the second son of William Huskisson, Esquire, of Oxley, near Wolverhampton. He married Elizabeth, daughter of John Rotton, Esquire, of an ancient Staffordshire family. On his marriage with this lady, Mr. Huskisson hired the residence called Birch Moreton Court—then belonging to the Earl of Belmont—with an extensive farm attached to it, in the county of Worcester, where the subject of this Memoir was born, on the 11th of March 1770.

Mr. and Mrs. Huskisson had three other sons,*

* Richard, who died in the West-Indies, and of whom further mention will be made hereafter—Samuel, a major-general in the

the two younger of whom are still living. Upon the death of his wife, which occurred soon after her giving birth to the youngest of these boys, in the year 1774, Mr. Huskisson, having lost his elder brother about the same time, quitted Worcestershire, and returned to his father's house; where, having succeeded to the property, he continued to reside till his own death, in 1790.

These minute particulars respecting the birth and family of the late Mr. Huskisson have been considered necessary, because attempts have been made to represent him as an illegitimate child;—a stigma on the memory of his parents, which he indignantly refuted in a speech made from the hustings, at his first election for Liverpool, where placards had been circulated by some of his opponents, warning the electors not to waste their votes on a candidate who was ineligible, as being “an illegitimate alien.” “Gentlemen,” said Mr. Huskisson, “I scorn to disprove, however indignantly I repel, that part of this false accusation which applies to my parents.”

The long and intimate friendship which subsisted uninterruptedly for so many years between Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Canning, and the striking coincidences in the lives and fortunes of these two great men, may recall to the recollection of many,

King's Army, who served many years with distinction in the East-Indies—and Charles, who resides upon his own property in Worcestershire.

that a similar charge of illegitimacy was propagated by falsehood and malignity, in order to cast a slur upon the birth of the latter. To such base and contemptible expedients will some natures descend, to wound the feelings, or to excite a prejudice against those whose well-earned fame and popularity they are unable to overturn, by assailing either their public or private character.

We may pass briefly and rapidly over the preliminary part of Mr. Huskisson's education. It is sufficient to say that, on his mother's death—being then about five years old—he was placed at an infant school at Brewood, in Staffordshire, more, as may well be understood, for the purpose of being taken care of, than for that of instruction; that he was afterwards removed to Albrighton, and lastly to Appleby, in Leicestershire, where, young as he was, he gave evident promise of those talents by which, in after-life, he acquired for himself such a splendid reputation. It is singular that even then he evinced the peculiar aptitude for figures and calculation, which subsequently enabled him in Parliament to give to the most intricate numerical details a clearness unequalled in the financial expositions of other statesmen, and which (as it has been said) rendered his statements so intelligible, as to make even those of his auditors least conversant with such subjects, believe, at least, that they understood his plans, and comprehended his reasoning.

But whatever might have been the early genius exhibited by Mr. Huskisson, or however promising his talents and abilities at that period, the successful cultivation and development of them were, probably, owing in a great measure to the watchful care which was afterwards bestowed upon his education by his maternal great uncle, Dr. Gem.

As this gentleman is so intimately connected with the early life of Mr. Huskisson, and exercised such an important influence on his future destiny, a succinct account of him cannot be deemed altogether devoid of interest, or irrelevant to the objects of the present Memoir.

Dr. Gem was a physician of considerable eminence in his day, and well known and highly esteemed, not more for his professional skill, than for his other numerous scientific and literary attainments. When the Duke of Bedford was appointed Ambassador to France, at the peace of 1763, Dr. Gem accompanied him as physician to the Embassy. The brilliant society of men of letters, in which he constantly mixed, and the facilities which Paris then presented for the pursuit of different branches of science, proved so congenial to his nature, that he determined to fix his residence in that capital and its vicinity; still, however, paying frequent visits to his friends in England, and to a small patrimonial estate which he possessed in Worcestershire. Towards his niece, Mrs. Huskisson, he always entertained a particular

affection, and after her death continued to take great interest in her children. Their father having contracted a second marriage, Dr. Gem became anxious that the two elder of his nephews should be entrusted to his care. After some hesitation, his wishes were complied with, and they were permitted to accompany their great uncle on his return to Paris in 1783.

When this arrangement took place, Mr. Huskisson was in the fourteenth year of his age, and of a disposition calculated to derive the greatest advantages from the guidance and superintendence of a mind like that of Dr. Gem, who presided over his education with unremitting care, and scrutinizing attention. Those who recollect having seen them together, during the visit which the Doctor annually made with his young charges to England, describe him as exacting from the boys a strict and diligent application to their studies, and as indefatigable in his efforts to foster and expand the indications of genius with which their minds were endowed by nature.

He lived to reap the satisfaction of knowing, that these efforts had not been unavailing, and that he had not laboured on an unthankful soil. Whether he was at any time disposed to direct the studies of his elder nephew towards the pursuit of his own profession is uncertain and unimportant; but it is perfectly ascertained, that such an idea, if it were ever cherished, met with

no corresponding inclination on the other part, and that Mr. Huskisson, at no moment of his life, either actually practised, or displayed the slightest disposition towards, the profession of medicine. Another assertion which has been put forward,—that he had for a time been a clerk in a banking establishment at Paris,—is equally erroneous.

Insignificant and uninteresting as these particulars may appear at first sight, they acquire a certain degree of importance; since it might be attempted to build upon them, if passed over in silence, an impression that, from the pecuniary circumstances and prospects of Mr. Huskisson, it was a point, not only of prudence but of necessity, that he should be trained up to the exercise of some profession. Such was far from being the case. The greater part of the Staffordshire property was entailed upon him; and though his uncle might have feared the consequences of idleness, and have wished to guard against the evil effects, which a residence amid the allurements of a dissipated metropolis was likely to produce upon a young and ardent mind, without occupation or any legitimate object of regular pursuit, he was perfectly aware that his nephew might, as far as fortune went, be fairly excused in preferring the freedom of an easy, though moderate, independence, to the laborious exercise of a profession towards which he felt no predilection.

The moment at which Dr. Gem first undertook

the charge of Mr. Huskisson and his brother was one full of extraordinary political interest; and, of all places in the world, Paris was the one in which this interest would be likely to act the most powerfully upon a youthful and energetic imagination. France had just terminated a contest, in which she had gathered laurels for herself and humiliated her ancient rival. She had contributed, in no small degree, towards wresting from England her transatlantic colonies, and establishing on a solid basis the independence of the United States of America; whilst, by assisting to win freedom for them, she had advanced the first, and the most important step towards the regeneration of her own. Fashion and philosophy had united their powers to favour the triumph of liberal opinions, and it was scarcely possible to withstand their combined influence and attractions.

On the generous nature of Mr. Huskisson, the stirring events of the times undoubtedly produced a powerful impression; and every year naturally added to his enthusiasm for the success of a cause, which enlisted in its favour all the best sympathies of humanity, and which was as yet unsullied by the horrible atrocities which marked its after-course with blood and crime; while the financial discussions which followed in rapid succession, as the difficulties of the times grew more complicated, seized upon the peculiar bent of his understanding, and gave him a turn for the study of political

knowledge, which may be said to have decided his future destiny.

But the natural inclination of youth to view with favour the popular doctrines of freedom and reform, was strongly seconded and encouraged by the society with whom his uncle principally mixed; which comprised many of those who were most deeply imbued with the prevailing tenets of liberalism and philosophy. Dr. Gem was intimately acquainted both with Franklin and Jefferson;* he

* The following letter from the last of these eminent persons, will shew the estimation in which Doctor Gem was held :—

“ New York, April 4, 1790.

“ In bidding adieu, my dear Doctor, to the country which united our residence, I find the loss of your society and instructive conversation among the leading circumstances of regret. Be assured that I feel it most sensibly, and accept my warm acknowledgments for all your kindnesses and services to me and my family while at Paris.

“ I hope that your philanthropy is by this time fully gratified by the final establishment of order and equal government, in a country which you love, and that you will still be blessed in seeing them extended to others, so as to found a rational hope, that man is at length destined to be happy and free.

“ Our affairs wear a very pleasing aspect. The opposition to our new government has been perfectly reconciled by the amendments proposed by Congress. They have thought proper to call for my services in a more advanced station. This would have been flattering, had my views been fixed on any thing but retirement; but with this disposition, I would have wished that to be the only remaining change of my life.

“ The interest you have been so good as to take in my happiness, will not render indifferent to you the information, that my daughter is married agreeably to my most sanguine wishes: the talents, temper, family, and fortune of the young gentleman are all I could have desired.

frequented the *Salons* of the principal Encyclopedists, and possibly he may have been supposed to have participated in some of those notions, which formed a distinguishing feature of that sect. But through the dangerous ordeal of such a school, to the adoption of whose precepts there were so many incitements, the clearness and strength of Mr. Huskisson's mind carried him on uncontaminated; and his love of improvement, and of civil and religious liberty, remained untainted by any leaven of doubt or infidelity. So much was this the case, that it has been mentioned of him by those who had frequent opportunities of observing him, that, regardless of the influence of fashion, or of example, he would often, when the conversation took a sceptical tone, endeavour to change the subject.

Mr. Huskisson was present at the taking and destruction of the Bastile in July 1789. At this time, his zeal and enthusiasm for the cause of liberty had reached their zenith. In the course of the following year, he became a member of the "Club of 1789," which had been then just established. His connexion with this Society,

sired. God bless you, my dear Doctor, with life and health, and be assured of the constant affections of

"Your sincere friend and humble servant,

"TH. JEFFERSON."

"A Monsieur, Monsieur le Docteur Gem,

"en son Hôtel, Rue St. Sepulcre,

"à Paris."

which has been, for the worst purposes, distorted into an accusation of having been an active member of the Jacobin Club, will be best explained by quoting his words ; and no apology need be made for inserting here an extract from a Speech which has been before referred to, and which he made at Liverpool in 1823, when the part which he had taken in the early scenes of the French Revolution was candidly stated and manfully avowed :

“ The honourable gentleman seems to insinuate that, at the commencement of the French Revolution, I was a zealous advocate for the principles of that revolution, and I am sure that the terms in which he alluded to that part of my conduct do not call from me any complaint. I might have been all which he stated, without having done any thing unworthy of an Englishman. In the early period of my life, when I was about nineteen, I was in France ; and if I should then have been misled by a mistaken admiration of, what I now think, the errors of that revolution, I trust that the ardour of youth would be no discreditable excuse, and would not injure me in your estimation. But my thanks are due to the honourable gentleman for having afforded me an opportunity of stating, openly and publicly, what my conduct was at that period, and under those circumstances. I am the more thankful for it, because I know that, in whispers and insinuations, that conduct has been inputed to me as disgraceful.

“ I am aware, Gentlemen, that, among other calumnies under which I have sometimes suffered, it has been stated, that I was once an active member of the Jacobin Club. I deny that I ever belonged to that club, or to any club of that name and description, and I challenge any man to

prove it. I never was but once in the Jacobin Club. I went there, by their permission, as other Englishmen did, to satisfy my own curiosity. I recollect that the late Mr. Windham was one of the party who went the same evening; and, if my memory does not, at this distance of time, deceive me, another was a friend of mine, a baronet belonging to a neighbouring county, the present Sir John Stanley. But I own that I was a member of another club which was then formed in Paris, and which took the name of the "Club of 1789." The principles of that Society were to support the monarchy, as settled and limited by the King's acceptance of the constitution in that year. That club was set up in opposition to the anarchical doctrines and daring endeavours of the Jacobins to destroy the monarchy, and in the hopes of proving a rallying point to those who, whilst they were anxious, on the one hand, to counteract such criminal projects, were not less desirous, on the other, to prevent the return of the absolute power and abuses of the former system; neither supporting the pretensions of the old royalists, who would admit of no limitation or restraint upon the power of the Throne, nor the excesses of those who were, in fact, though not, perhaps, in intention, their best allies. The one party were struggling to restore arbitrary power: the other pursuing a course which was sure to lead, as it ultimately did lead, through spoliation and misery, and oceans of blood, to a military despotism. Possibly it may have been an act of indiscretion in an Englishman to have belonged to any political society in France at that period. But I am not ashamed to avow, that I was anxious to see a rational system of liberty established in that fine country; which, while it increased the happiness of the People, should limit the extravagant power of the Crown, and prevent it from plunging the country, for purposes of caprice or ambition, in unjust and iniquitous wars. I seldom attended, and never but once

took part in the proceedings of the Club to which I have alluded ; and it was for the purpose of offering my opinion against the creation of that Paper Money, which was the foundation of all the subversion of property which followed ; which gave to the Jacobins the command of the resources of France ; and which led, first, to the overthrow of the monarchy, and, in succession, to the subjugation of Flanders, Holland, and Italy. When the plan of issuing Assignats was determined on by the Legislature, I withdrew even from that Society, and never took any further part in their discussions.

“ If, Gentlemen, it be a crime to have thought too sanguinely of mankind at the age of nineteen, and to have believed it not impossible that liberty might be sustained against despotism, without becoming the victim of anarchy, to that crime I plead guilty. That guilt I share in common with many great and good men. I did entertain a hope, that such would be the result of the change which had then taken place in the institutions of France. That the sagacity of the great minister who at that time (1790) was at the head of affairs in England, did not foresee any danger to the peace of other states from that change, may be inferred from all his measures, even up to the year 1792, when, on the meeting of Parliament, the Speech from the Throne stated the most sanguine opinion, that there was nothing in the state of Europe which threatened to involve this country in hostilities.

“ I am sorry, Gentlemen, to have detained you so long ; but the charges brought against me to-day having been often insinuated in a less direct manner, I have only to express my satisfaction, that the honourable gentleman has afforded me an opportunity of vindicating myself from any suspicion of having been guilty of conduct unworthy of an Englishman and a friend to rational liberty, and, once

more, to thank you all for the patience and attention with which you have listened to my vindication."

Such, when stripped of its exaggerated colouring, is the foundation for all the charges and all the insinuations of "Jacobin" and "Jacobinism," which have been so unsparingly advanced against the early conduct of Mr. Huskisson. It can scarcely be necessary to remark, that had the arguments or sentiments avowed and employed in this Speech been considered as tinctured with a jacobinical spirit, or had the general principles of its Author been so understood, he would not, so shortly afterwards as was the case, have received an offer of becoming Secretary to the British Ambassador at the court of the Tuileries. Often as it has been referred to, it has never, to our knowledge, been published in this country. After a long search, a copy of it has been found in the British Museum among the proceedings of the Society of 1789, and it will be found, together with a Prospectus of the "Société,"* in the Appendix at the end of the third volume of this work, under the title by which it was originally published at Paris,—"*Discours prononcé par M. Huskisson, Anglois et Membre de la Société de 1789, à la Séance de cette Société, le 29 Août 1790.*" The

* Were any thing further than a perusal of the Speech itself required, to prove how grossly this circumstance of the early life of Mr. Huskisson has been misunderstood, we might refer to the prospectus

new finance operation to which it refers, was an issue of two milliards of assignats ; that is, about eighty-four millions sterling of paper currency, to be paid to the national creditors, and to be taken by the government in payment for the sales of the national lands ; there being already at the time assignats in circulation to a limited amount.

Mr. Huskisson argues therefore,—“ You had better exchange your land for your existing government securities, which do not circulate ; so that your acres may extinguish your debt. Whereas, if you put this enormous amount of paper-money into circulation, all the effect of it will be, that your prices in *paper* will go to any amount : your gold and silver will rise in *paper* price, like all other things, and you will have to pay a thousand livres in paper, for as much wheat as you now have for two hundred in silver.”

Mr. Huskisson was even then aware of the truth of the maxim in political economy, that the amount of *dead stock* possessed is what can never be made to circulate as *currency*. In fact, he saw and felt the fundamental error of the system of Law, who had acted on the presumption, that a house could be put into circulation instead of the rent of the house

of the “*Société de 1789*,” to shew that, though it has here, in conformity with his own words, been termed a Club, it had, in fact, no more the character of one, than any of the Scientific societies in this country—the Agricultural, Geological, &c.

—a field, instead of its year's produce—the estimated value of the aggregate of a succession of future receipts, instead of a representation of things existing, for consumption, or for sale in the market.

In spite of the objections which were pointed out, the plan of issuing assignats was adhered to, and Mr. Huskisson then detached himself from all further connexion with the Club. When he delivered this Speech, the Anglomanie was at its height in Paris, and the young Englishman soon found himself an object of general interest and admiration, in all the most distinguished liberal circles of that metropolis. His discourse was loudly extolled, his talents became the theme of general conversation, and his society was eagerly courted by people of the highest consideration and fashion of both sexes.

Nor did this first promise of future celebrity escape the notice, or fail to excite the attention of many of his own countrymen, whom the rapidly increasing interest of the passing events then attracted in large numbers to Paris, and by whom an introduction to Dr. Gem was eagerly sought. Among those who particularly noticed the young politician may be mentioned Mr. Hayley, himself at that time a warm favourer of the revolution, and then enjoying a considerable literary reputation; and Dr. Warner, chaplain to the English embassy, a person of great talents and acquirements, who had been some years before made

known to Dr. Gem through their mutual friend, the eccentric George Selwyn. Mr. Hayley attached himself warmly to young Huskisson, and an intimacy was then contracted, which lasted for many years, and which gave rise to an intercourse of the most friendly and confidential nature.

To the favourable opinion of Dr. Warner, Mr. Huskisson was indebted for his first introduction to the present Marquis of Stafford, then Lord Gower, our minister at Paris. Struck with the pleasing manners and promising talents of his youthful countryman, Dr. Warner mentioned him to the ambassador—to whom Dr. Gem was well known, both personally and by reputation—in terms of such high commendation, that an introduction took place, at the particular desire of Lord Gower, and this introduction was shortly followed up by an offer of becoming his Private Secretary. This offer Mr. Huskisson willingly accepted, and took up his abode at the Ambassador's Hotel some time in the year 1790.

Thus commenced Mr. Huskisson's acquaintance with Lord Gower and Lady Sutherland; an acquaintance which ripened into a friendship subsisting uninterruptedly through a period of forty years, and terminated only by his death; during the whole of which time he received from those noble persons constant proofs of their high estimation and sincere regard, while he never ceased to hold in grateful remembrance the kindness and pro-

tection which had fostered and encouraged the earliest efforts of his mind and talents.*

* The following Notes, copies of which Mrs. Huskisson has, from feelings easily understood, preserved, will prove how kindly these noble persons always interested themselves in Mr. Huskisson's public triumphs, and how warm a sense he ever entertained of their early protection and favour.

“ Westhill, Feb. 26, 1826.

“ DEAR HUSKISSON;

Nobody can rejoice more than I do at the success of your Speech on the Silk question. You may say, “ *sublimi feriam sidera vertice,*” with more justice than Horace could do.

“ To have, by just reason and eloquence, influenced the votes of Members of Parliament has fallen to the lot of few orators, and you are now classed among that select body.

“ I cannot conclude without doing justice to Lady Stafford, by saying that she enters into all my sentiments upon the occasion most sincerely. You must have great inward satisfaction in tracing your progress, from the period of your first display at the “ Club de 89 ” to the present time.

“ Believe me to be, with all the feelings of old friendship, sincerely yours,

“ STAFFORD.”

“ Somerset Place, Feb. 28, 1826.

“ DEAR LORD STAFFORD;

The recollections which you recall, and still more the kind manner in which you carry me back to such distant days, excited no ordinary feelings in my bosom, when I received, last night, your very friendly but too flattering letter of Sunday.

“ To those feelings, connected with the early aspirations of youth, and the assistance which you and Lady Stafford afforded in calling them into action, I cannot so easily give utterance as I did to those of an opposite nature, which unjust imputations drew from me on the occasion to which you refer. I will therefore be more discreet than I was in replying to Mr. Williams, and not make an attempt in which powers of language, far greater than any I could hope to command, would, I am persuaded, fail.

“ Believe me, dear Lord Stafford, with the truest esteem and attachment, yours,

“ W. HUSKISSON.”

Mr. Huskisson is described by some who remember him at Paris about this period, as being in the habit of employing a considerable part of his time in reading, but without secluding himself from society, which he always enjoyed ;—as kind and obliging in his manners, but without any over complaisance ;—and as having very much the same air, countenance, and manner which he retained through life, with less alteration than often happens through so long an interval.

Though, in common with many of the most virtuous and most eminent men of the day, he had hailed with transport the first rising of the day-star of liberty, and had openly proclaimed his zeal for the cause of reformation, yet his generous ardour for its ultimate success was speedily chilled, and he recoiled from the frightful excesses, and utter profligacy, of those who had by this time assumed the direction of the revolution. The scenes which crowded one upon another, and marked each succeeding day with some fresh outrage against humanity,—with some more flagrant violation of all laws, divine and human,—were such as to fill every virtuous breast with horror and alarm. Even the iron sceptre of royal despotism seemed preferable to the blood-dripping axe of the frantic demagogues of Paris, and when the mild virtues of the reigning monarch, and the extensive reforms and ameliorations which had already relieved the people

from their most vexatious burthens, and removed or alleviated the most galling of their grievances, were calmly weighed against the cruelties of the sanguinary tyrants of the Clubs, not a few of the best and wisest of the earliest champions of the new doctrines resolved to exert their utmost endeavours to preserve for the nation the benefits already won; but to arrest, if possible, the further progress of the revolutionary torrent, which threatened to sweep away all the land-marks of civilized government and to involve the world in one wide chaos of anarchy and infidelity.

That such a change in the feelings of Mr. Huskisson had been operated on this subject, when he resolved to accept the offer of Lord Gower, cannot be doubted,—that they were known to have experienced such an alteration may fairly be presumed, or that offer would scarcely have been made,—and that the different society into which he was now thrown, and his initiation into a more extensive and confidential acquaintance with the science of politics, strengthened and confirmed his determination to withdraw from any further participation in the debates of Clubs, and from all intimate communication with those who still pressed onwards their plans of revolutionary reform, is a supposition so reasonable that it might be asserted as a fact, even if his own authority did not survive for stating such to have been the case. The following letter paints in strong

terms the nature of his political feelings in 1792.

“ Paris, June 29, 1792.

“ My dear ———, *

“ When I wrote to our friend * * * *, a fortnight ago, I explained to him the principal reason of my delay in answering your kind letters. I did not expect that, after this delay of the office, fresh obstacles would be thrown in my way, at the Bibliothèque du Roi, as I was acquainted with the Chef, le President D'Ormesson. Unfortunately, intestine quarrels in the library, and an infamous *délation* have deprived him for these three weeks of his own comforts, and of the power of being of service to his friends in his capacity of librarian. Descendant of an ancient family, illustrious in the parliamentary annals of France, he is, as you may imagine, a great *aristocrat*. His love of curious old writings, joined to his principles, made him wish to preserve several old titles, genealogies, &c., deposited in the Library; all of which the Assembly has ordered to be committed to the flames. His conduct on this occasion was traduced to the Assembly by the demagogue Carra, who holds a place under him. Having absented himself from Paris, I thought more proper to wait his return than to make any inquiries

* As it may appear extraordinary how this and the following letters should have been preserved, and fallen into the hands of the compiler of the present Memoir, a short explanation is thought necessary.

They were addressed to an intimate friend, and upon his death, some years since, were discovered among his papers, and returned to Mr. Huskisson; in whose possession the packet remained unopened and forgotten, till recently found with other papers.

The letters must be regarded as the youthful effusions of unpremeditated confidence, and any interest which they may possess will be found in this circumstance.

among his enemies ; and as he will be back to-morrow, I shall be able to inform you exactly, by the next courier, whether the Biblothèque contains anything curious relative to Milton.

“ I suppose you will have seen in all the English papers an account of the shameful and odious conduct of the people of this place on the 20th instant. The miraculous preservation of the King amidst so many dangers, his admirable presence of mind during this long and painful scene, have gained him many friends among the better order of people, and seem to have added much to the affection of the army. His friends only wish that his courage was of a more active nature. In his conduct he seems to be supported by the spirit of a martyr, the tranquillity of a good conscience, the resignation of a Christian; but nothing hitherto shows the enterprising courage and intrepidity of a hero, capable of great and astonishing resolutions, executed with that energy which strikes his enemies with terror, and ensures success to his cause.

“ Believe, me, &c. &c.

“ W. H.”

To pursue the fearful march of the French Revolution is no part of this work ; but one anecdote connected with the events of the fatal 10th of August, may well find admittance here. The publication of it can no longer offend the delicacy, or wound the feelings of any person now living.

On the evening of that dreadful day, when slaughter had stayed its weary arm, and it became possible for a foreigner to venture forth into the streets of Paris, Mr. Huskisson wan-

dered out to view the field of conflict, and to endeavour to obtain some more accurate information of the transactions which had taken place in the last twenty-four hours. The residence of the English Ambassador was then at the Hotel de Monaco, in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, where Mr. Huskisson inhabited a suite of rooms on one side of the gate, similar to one on the other side, which had been the apartments of the Comte de Valentinois, while the Princesse de Monaco lived there. When Mr. Huskisson returned to his apartments, he found that during his absence, Monsieur de Champcenetz, the then Governor of the Tuileries, had taken refuge there. It appeared that this nobleman had, when the palace was assaulted and carried by the infuriated mob, either been thrown, or had jumped from, one of the windows, and that he had fallen amongst some of the unfortunate Swiss, whose bodies lay in heaps around the palace, which they had so gallantly attempted to defend. After remaining in this perilous situation for some hours, and happily eluding the murderous search of the wretches who were busily engaged in giving the finishing stroke to any of the victims who still breathed, M. de Champcenetz had, as the darkness of the evening closed on this fatal day, contrived with much difficulty to make his way unperceived to the hotel of the British Ambassador; where, by passing himself for an Englishman, he had ob-

tained access to the apartments of Mr. Huskisson, with whom he was slightly acquainted. Here Mr. Huskisson found him concealed. The situation was one of the utmost delicacy, and of the greatest embarrassment. M. de Champcenetz threw himself upon his honour, and appealed to his generosity and humanity to protect him against the assassins. To drive him from his refuge was virtually to become his murderer, and to deliver him up to a fate even more cruel than that from which he had escaped. To allow him to remain was to incur the deepest responsibility, to run the risk of compromising the Ambassador, and consequently to hazard the danger of provoking a war between France and England. It was as imperative to keep the knowledge that a person so closely attached to the Royal Family had taken shelter in the Hotel of the Embassy, from reaching Lord Gower, as it was to prevent the circumstance from being discovered by the blood-thirsty populace. In this dilemma, Mr. Huskisson at last bethought himself of placing his unfortunate guest under the protection of a laundress, on whose fidelity he knew he could confide. He contrived to have him secretly conveyed to her dwelling, furnished him with money and whatever else he required, and at the expiration of a week of mutual alarm and anxiety, had the happiness of ascertaining that he had quitted Paris in safety. This nobleman died a few years ago, having been

restored to the government of the Tuileries by Louis XVIII.

After the catastrophe of the 10th of August, and the deposition of Louis XVI. by the Convention, the British Government recalled its Minister. Mr. Huskisson accompanied Lord Gower and his family to England. We insert a letter, written shortly after he reached England, which explains his reasons for quitting Paris at this time, rather than continuing there as his Uncle did, and expresses the horror which he felt at the scenes which now disgraced France.

“ London, Sept. 12, 1792.

“ My dear ———,

“ You will not be astonished at receiving this letter from London, as report must have made you acquainted with the scenes of horror and cruelty, which have disgraced humanity in France, and rendered its capital uninhabitable. The change in the Government, which took place on the 10th of August, obliged Lord Gower to return to England. The obstacles opposed to Englishmen who wished to leave Paris (so great that it was almost impossible), joined to the daily expectation of the terrible events which have since taken place in the beginning of last week, determined me to embrace the offer of returning with him to the land of true liberty. I saw * * * * at Boulogne, far too sanguine in his expectations of political happiness for France,—too confident in the virtues of a people, disgraced by acts of wanton cruelty unparalleled in history. Their wretched situation, the cruel fate which too probably awaits them, the approaching return of despotism which their corruption and want of union have

rendered necessary, make me think with sorrow and reluctance on the subject.

“ I have left my uncle and many friends in Paris, but flatter myself they have escaped the fury of the people; as it seems on the last occasion to have been turned principally against the unfortunate priests, or those who, by giving rise to suspicion, on account of their intrigues and imprudent conduct, had already been imprisoned.

“ Ever yours,

“ W. H.”

From another letter, written in the following October, Mr. Huskisson appears, shortly after his return from France, to have entertained some thoughts of publishing a pamphlet on the State of Affairs, and to have been only dissuaded from it by the arguments of some of his friends. After mentioning his conversion to their reasoning, he continues—

“ As for the fear so warmly felt by you, that my ideas should encourage the aristocratical tendency of this country, I was well aware of it at the time; but do not think, in the present situation of things, with the contempt I have shown for the aristocracy of France, that they can have any improper effect of that sort. The first and most ardent of my wishes, as a friend to humanity, as a member of the British empire, is to see it remain in its present prosperous condition, and to see the public opinion, *that supreme and sovereign power*, united in the support of the constitution as it now stands; for innovation is a boundless ocean, where some attractive resting places, scattered to and fro, may tempt the ruined inhabitants of barbarous

and despotic countries; but where too many greedy pirates await the secure and philanthropic adventurer from happier realms. As for any comparison between the present rulers of France and the leading characters of the combined powers, it would certainly be greatly to the advantage of the latter.

“ If fate had placed me in any station in the French empire, I should, as a *citizen*, wishing destruction to both, go to some unfrequented part of the world, there to hide the opprobrium of a title at present dishonoured. The mind sinks at the recollection of the crimes of a sect composed of those, and of those alone, to whom a just and general contempt had inspired ideas of terrible vengeance. Not a man of virtue among them; not a man who would make the least sacrifice to save his falling country; for ever committing crimes, or indulging in the prospect of those which they cannot commit; for ever existing between the dictates of pride and the insatiable wants of envy; for ever the bloody axe of tyrants, or the treacherous dagger of the assassin in their hands, looking out for victims as their delight; fond, by principle, of calamities and misfortunes, and capable only of enjoying the blood of indignant innocence, or the tears of surviving despair.”

On his return to England, he continued to pass the greater part of his time in the family of Lord Gower, either at Wimbledon or in London, where he often met Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas.

The Government, about this time, found that it was indispensable to make some arrangement for the creation of an office, at which the claims

and affairs of the numerous bodies of Emigrants, who now thronged to take refuge in England, might be heard and discussed, The subject was one day mentioned at a dinner at Lord Gower's, and Mr. Dundas expressed himself very desirous to find some person, who, to good abilities and gentlemanly manners, should unite a perfect knowledge of the French language. As the result of this conversation was to introduce Mr. Huskisson for the first time into active employment, it may, perhaps, be most satisfactory to give the whole transaction in his own words, as quoted from a letter written a few days after it had taken place :—

“ Whitehall, 18th Jan. 1793.

“ My dear ———,

“ You will, I hope, excuse a short and hasty letter from a man engaged in public business, and not a little disturbed by private sorrow. I wish it were in my power to repay you for your very kind consolation and advice, by any information which I know you so anxiously wish to receive. Mr. Pitt dined at Lord Gower's; but Mr. Long could not come. Indeed, the minister was not there till an hour later than his time, and only staid during dinner; at which the conversation turned entirely upon business, and gave rise to the accidental circumstance which has called me to my present situation.

“ A lady of France having made an application to Lord Gower in the morning, with respect to the manner of conforming to the Alien's Bill, the question was referred to Mr. Dundas and Mr. Pitt. The former said, that they were in want of a person who could speak the language,

and direct the execution of that Bill, according to the views of Government; which were, to show every possible civility and respect to all foreigners, whose conduct in this country had not given rise to any suspicion, and especially to save to the ladies the trouble of appearing at the public offices. Mr. Dundas gave several hints, that he wished me to accept of the post. I gave no answer at the time; but was so strongly advised by Lord Gower to take the opportunity of showing my desire of being useful, that I delayed it only till the next morning. It was of course accepted, and in such a manner that I am rather glad to have made the offer, though it is certainly not a place that I would have asked for. At present, it takes up the whole of my time; and I am even not able to do without the assistance of one, and frequently of two clerks.

“ I don't know upon what you build your hopes of peace. Is it possible, after Lord Grenville's letter, and the frequent and solemn declarations of the French, with respect to the Scheldt? *En attendant*, there are cabinets held every day, and frequently till very late in the night.

“ Your's ever,

“ W. H.”

Though there was undoubtedly little captivating in the nature of this new office, and little in the prospects which it held out, to render it particularly desirable to Mr. Huskisson, yet various circumstances had occurred, which, added to the strong representations of Lord Gower, determined him to embrace this opening, as an introduction to public life.

He had succeeded to the entailed property in Staffordshire on the death of his father, which

took place in 1790; but that gentleman had been obliged to alienate a very considerable portion of the remainder, in order to make provision for his younger children; of whom he left eight by his two marriages. To effectuate this purpose, it became necessary to sell the lands at Bushbury (which adjoined to the Oxley Estate, comprehended in the entail), together with the advowson; so that Mr. Huskisson found himself placed in a situation very different from that in which his predecessors had hitherto lived. Owing to this, and to some objections of a private nature, not worth detailing here, the idea of a residence in Staffordshire was repugnant to him, and he was induced to take measures for cutting off the entail, and for disposing of the landed property altogether. But, apart from these considerations, it may easily be imagined, that the busy and inspiring scenes amid which his youth had been spent, the habits which he had contracted, and the society to which he was accustomed, acting upon the energies and expansion of his powerful mind, had unfitted him for following the example of his ancestors, or for finding content and occupation in the tranquil and unvarying life of a country gentleman.

Dry and unimportant in their details, and oftentimes harsh and unthankful in their nature, as were necessarily the duties which he had to perform in his new situation, Mr. Huskisson never

suffered himself to relax in his attention. To remarkable acuteness and unwearied application, he united a singular facility in comprehending the views of others, and clearness in explaining his own. Few persons were ever better qualified to judge of the talents and capacity of those employed under them than Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas; and they were not slow in discerning, that in Mr. Huskisson were combined, in an eminent degree, all the requisites towards forming a valuable man of business, and a most efficient public servant. His conduct in his present office justified the opinion they had formed of his abilities, and shortly won their entire confidence; whilst it laid the foundation of a friendship which endured unimpaired to the close of their lives.

About this period, he became acquainted with Mr. Canning, who had been recently returned to Parliament, and who entered into public life under the avowed patronage of Mr. Pitt; and a friendship began which remained unchanged and unweakened, through all the vicissitudes of their remaining years.

Early in the year 1794, we find Mr. Huskisson expressing his hope that, in the course of a short time, the heavy pressure of his official avocations would be somewhat lightened; and he speaks with satisfaction of his expectation of being able to devote some hours of every day to a course of study. He was fully sensible of the justice of

that maxim of Cicero, "*Quantum detraxit ex studio, tantum amisit ex gloriâ,*" and although he never pursued his studies to the abandonment of all society, yet it is perfectly obvious, that he must have applied himself to reading in his early years with intense diligence. What it was his ambition in aftertimes to make England for the rest of the world—a mighty emporium to which people of all nations should resort to satisfy their wants,—such he appears to have endeavoured to make his mind,—a vast storehouse, where knowledge was carefully laid up, always attainable when called for, and always open to the demands, and for the benefit, of those who resorted to it: while the value of the information which was drawn from this rich treasury was sure to be heightened by the simplicity of manner and unostentatious kindness, with which it was imparted.

What he read he retained fresh and correct; for although in later years his reading was not extensive, he seemed to know, as if intuitively, where any passage which he wanted, either in ancient or modern literature, might be found. It was a never failing source of admiration to those about him, whence he drew this profound and ready information; for they seldom saw in his hand, beyond the daily and parliamentary papers, anything but a review, or an occasional pamphlet.

This facility of directing himself to those autho-

rities, whence the information which he required to strengthen or elucidate his arguments was to be derived, was strikingly exemplified in a speech which he made in the last session of Parliament, on presenting a Petition from the Merchants engaged in the trade with Mexico, complaining of the expeditions fitted out against that Republic from the island of Cuba. In this speech, Mr. Huskisson embodied, and brought together, a number of passages relating to the importance of that island, and to the long cherished views of the American Government with respect to the navigation of the Gulf of Mexico, which, though they might have been previously known to many, yet, when illustrated by his judicious application and reasoning, and placed in juxta-position with the statements of the Petition, gave to his arguments a force and a novelty, which made a fresh and powerful impression upon the House.

In the course of this year (1794), he had the misfortune to lose his favourite brother Richard.* The letters which he wrote on this

* This young man had devoted himself, with all the enthusiasm of youth, to the study of medicine, and gave promise of the highest talents. In his eagerness for the pursuit of knowledge, he proceeded to the West-Indies, with the sanguine hope of being able to make some more accurate discoveries into the origin and proper treatment of the yellow fever, and fell an early victim to his zeal in the cause of humanity. The late Mr. Huskisson was ever tenderly attached to his memory.

occasion pourtray so faithfully the strength of the attachment which he felt towards him, that we cannot resist inserting a few of them.

“ Pall-mall, 15th Sept. 1794.

“ * * * I have more than once heard you lament the premature loss of some most valuable friends. These early separations are certainly to be placed at the head of the many severe calamities which befall youth. They are in general unexpected, and press heavy upon us, like all misfortunes for which we are unprepared. That a brother should be dear to us is natural, for

‘ Un frère est un ami donné par la nature ;’

but here how many circumstances, which do not always occur, had strengthened the fortuitous ties of nature—~~not~~ separated for twenty-three years, and those the first twenty-three of our lives ; and now through mine, however long, I am never to see him more. However long it may be, I feel that the best half of it is gone.

“ W. H.”

“ London, 15th Oct. 1794.

“ My dear ———,

“ * * * Now to return to the subject which presses most on my mind—he whose character you so justly describe in saying, that he appeared to possess great intelligence and activity of spirit, with singular sweetness of disposition—any particularly striking instance in which these qualities were brought into action, during the short period he followed his honourable pursuits, may not have reached me, from want of sufficient information ; but permit me to say something of the uniform tenor of his conduct during his public service, and the effects of it, as reported to his superiors.

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“ In March 1793 he was employed, in his professional capacity, on board the *Thetis* frigate; which, with another ship of the same force, went to St. Helena, and returned in August. The other ship lost near seventy of her crew, by the scurvy and putrid fever. The *Thetis* returned without losing a single man. I can only attribute this difference to the unremitting attention of the surgeon to the first object of his profession—preservation of the men's health. His principal care was, not to administer a few ineffectual drugs, until the death of the patient relieved him from his task, but to watch, and guard against, the causes of the complaint. The overcoming influence of a long calm under the Line, with a vertical sun and constant rain, baffled the ordinary powers of medicine, but was successfully opposed by an attention to the preventive art; which unfortunately too many surgeons, in similar situations, scarcely consider as a part of their profession.

“ He had the good fortune (and I reckon it among the principal causes of his success) to entice from the men an early disclosure of their complaints, which very frequently become irrecoverable, by the neglect of these poor ignorant wretches; which is less, however, to be imputed to them, than to the ill-judged policy, which entitles the surgeon to a daily share of the sailor's wages during his treatment; and, as the greatest part of the navy surgeon's emoluments arise from this disgraceful regulation, necessity often obliges him to enforce it.

“ Fortunately, this was not my brother's case. Immediately after his return to England, he went a volunteer, in the land service, to Ostend and Nieuport; where many scenes of distress, after the unfortunate battle before Dunkirk and the siege of Nieuport, gave him, for the first time, an opportunity of taking a part in the service more particularly allotted to the surgeon. From this service,

he proceeded on that in which, after his first success in warm climates, he had reason to think he should be most useful.

“ I must follow him to this painful scene ; for here again preservation was his principal care : by attention to the cleanliness, to the diet, and particularly to the ventilation of the troops crowded on board transports, in their passage to Barbadoes ;—in pointing out proper spots for the camps during the last campaign, whenever the service would admit of it, so as to avoid putrid effluvia, damps, &c.

“ Of his zealous attention to his duty, after the breaking out of the fatal fever among the troops, I have the strongest testimonials. A common practice of the surgeons was to ask the patients a few short questions, and to hasten away to prescribe. He, on the contrary, was constantly with the sick, going from bed to bed, watching a favourable crisis to administer medicines, and then administering them himself. Exposed, as he was, by this conduct, he escaped the infection much longer than most of those who, from fear, forsook their duty.

“ His suggestions (several of them mechanical) on the means of preservation I have mentioned, were so simple and obviously useful, that he seldom found the least difficulty in persuading the officers he served with, either in the army or navy, to carry them into execution. Dictated by good sense and humanity, they were no sooner mentioned by him, than every one was astonished the same observation had not been made before ; and I have frequently heard him mention this circumstance with pleasure after his first voyage, looking upon it, whenever it occurred, as a certain test of the utility of the proposed measure.

“ You know with what difficulty the mind breaks off from these melancholy subjects till the spirits are ex-

hausted. On this occasion, I am afraid you will think mine have held out longer than your patience. Excuse me.

“ Ever yours,

“ W. H.”

The Government soon discovered that the powers of Mr. Huskisson's mind were of a character far beyond the sphere in which they had hitherto been employed, and that they demanded a wider and more important range for their useful development and application. Accordingly, when, in the spring of 1795, Mr. Nepean was appointed Secretary to the Admiralty, an arrangement was made, by which Mr. Huskisson succeeded his friend as Under Secretary of State in the department of War and Colonies; the seals of which were then held by Mr. Dundas.

The following letter will show how severely and conscientiously he contemplated the duties which he contracted on occupying this new office, and the resolute determination with which he had brought himself to regard the sacrifices demanded from him by his increasing application to the public service.

“ Horse Guards, 12th March, 1795.

“ My dear ———,

“ * * * I am upon the whole better, having nearly succeeded in getting rid of my cough, and am now, what I must be content hereafter to call *well*; *c'est à dire*, my former healthy disposition changed into an enfeebled

habit (*délabrée*, as the French say, but not by my follies), without having however to complain of the existence of any real illness.

“ Under these circumstances, I have ventured to accept the very arduous situation from which my friend Nepean has lately been removed, by his appointment to the Secretaryship of the Admiralty Board. I cannot help being flattered by this preference given to me over so many others. I shall certainly exert myself to show that I am worthy of it, not without regretting sometimes that these efforts will deprive me of many happy hours, and contribute still more to injure my health; but whatever sacrifices must be made I feel that I shall not shrink from them. It might have been more conducive to my happiness to have shunned the bustle of a public life; but, once started in the career, it becomes me to go on as long as my services are deemed acceptable; and certainly the moment the least proper of all others to think of retiring, is that in which I have received a very gratifying proof that they are viewed in this light.

“ Believe me,

“ W. H.”

From this period Mr. Huskisson may be considered as having finally abandoned himself to the pursuit of politics, and his history, to the close of his life, is more or less prominently connected with that of almost all great public measures. Living in habits of the strictest friendship, and most confidential communication, with Mr. Pitt, he was often called to the private councils of that great Statesman; while, from the many demands upon the time and attention of Mr. Dun-

das, the executive direction of the War and Colonial department devolved very much upon the Under Secretary. The archives of that department would afford multiplied and important proofs of the talents and assiduity by which Mr. Huskisson justified the high opinion, and flattering preference, which had placed him there; but it may be sufficient here to mention, as a single instance, that the indefatigable exertions, and consummate skill, manifested by him in the arrangements and equipment of the Expedition which, under the able conduct of Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Grey, achieved such brilliant exploits in the West-Indies, drew from that distinguished officer the warmest encomiums; and he is known ever after to have expressed himself in strong terms of admiration of Mr. Huskisson's services on that occasion.

Towards the close of the year 1796, he was first brought into Parliament for the Borough of Morpeth, under the patronage of the late Lord Carlisle, who was much attached to him, and who at that time supported Mr. Pitt's Government. But, devoted to the laborious and daily increasing duties of his office, he did not allow either his vanity or his ambition to entice him from an undivided attention to them, for the sake of a premature display, on a stage where he was destined to gain, in after-times, such splendid triumphs in the cause of liberal

and enlightened policy. On the contrary, he appears, by a reference to the Parliamentary Debates of that period, to have spoken for the first time in February 1798, when he moved, "that there be laid before the House, copies of the Correspondence between the Transport Board and the French Government, relative to Captain Sir Sydney Smith, and in general relative to the Exchange of Prisoners between the two countries;"—a motion which he introduced by a short speech, in confutation of the calumnies and misrepresentations circulated in France, on the treatment of French prisoners in this country. There is nothing extant in the parliamentary history of Mr. Huskisson, which would bear the character of what is usually termed a maiden speech.

It is probable that the soundness of his judgment, together with a constitutional diffidence, which he never shook off, induced him to confine himself narrowly to the business of his department, and, by a steady and watchful observation of parliamentary proceedings, to cultivate and bring to maturity his natural and acquired abilities, before he took part in general debates. Perhaps the lustre of that constellation of statesmen and orators which then adorned the House of Commons—perhaps, even the brilliant success which had attended the first efforts of Mr. Canning—may have confirmed him in this reserve.

During the whole of the long and glorious career in which these two illustrious friends were constantly associated, the latter seems invariably to have regarded all subjects, which either required the exertion, or were calculated for a display, of the powers of oratory, as the peculiar province of his eloquent colleague, and to have restricted himself to other and less imposing sources of political greatness and distinction. Nor had the country cause to regret that such was his election. His ascent, indeed, to the Temple of Fame was slow and laborious, such as few minds of equal endowments have patience and perseverance to pursue; but he acquired, during his long progress, the most perfect knowledge of Finance, and the most intimate acquaintance with all the various bearings of our Commercial Interests which were, perhaps, ever possessed by any one man. It made him, in short,—to sum up all in the comprehensive phrase of Mr. Canning,—“the best practical man of business in England.”

The weight and importance of the duties which pressed particularly upon his department, and engrossed all his time, made him often look with something like regret towards those pleasures of private life, which he was compelled to relinquish, but to the enjoyment of which he was through life warmly attached. In 1798, he says, “We are placed in an awful crisis, and this Office has certainly far more than its share of the labours

and responsibility that attend such a state of things. I am resolved to do my utmost; but I feel most sensibly that, whilst the duties of public life cannot be adjourned, they compel me to neglect many of the duties, and nearly all the enjoyments, of private life." And again, in the same year, when recovering from the effects of a long illness, brought on by over fatigue and application, he repeats, "I cannot reconcile to myself to hold a public situation and not to do the duties of it. I must discharge them or quit it altogether."

On the retirement of Mr. Pitt in 1801, Mr. Huskisson, as well as Mr. Canning, resigned his situation. At the request of Lord Hobart, however, who succeeded to the War and Colonial Department, seconded by the urgent solicitations of Mr. Dundas, who was particularly anxious that the following up of certain measures, then in progress, should have the advantage of being conducted to a termination by a person who had been acquainted with his views and intentions, he consented to continue to exercise the functions of Under Secretary for a short time, until Lord Hobart should have made himself conversant with the nature and management of his new office.

In this arrangement he acquiesced very reluctantly, and on a distinct understanding, that it should be considered as merely temporary.

On intelligence being received of the glorious Battle of Alexandria, and of the unfortunate death of the gallant Sir Ralph Abercrombie, it became necessary for the Government at home to select his successor ; and it has been supposed that some difference of opinion arose on this subject. However that may have been, Mr. Huskisson then claimed, that the time for his retirement was arrived, and he accordingly withdrew into private life.

Though living in constant and familiar intimacy with, and forming one of that brilliant circle, whose combined wit and genius gave birth to the " Anti-Jacobin," there is no entire article in that publication, to which even conjecture has ever affixed the name of Mr. Huskisson. Nor were any of the various lampoons, or lighter satirical effusions, in which the period of Mr. Addington's Administration was so prolific, ever attributed to his pen. This is the more remarkable, because, in the unrestrained intercourse of his domestic life, few people surpassed him in the charms of a natural playfulness of manner and conversation, and still fewer could equal him in acuteness, and in a quick perception of whatever was ridiculous.

The year before he quitted office Mr. Huskisson lost his Uncle, who died at Paris in 1800 ; and the following letter, in which he mentions the death of this venerable relation, proves how lively was the sense which the nephew always enter-

tained of the benefits which he owed to the care and kindness which had superintended his youthful education.

“ My dear ———, “ Downing-street, 2d May, 1800.

“ * * * I have just received from Paris the account of the sudden death of my good uncle; who has terminated a career of eighty-three years, undisturbed by any of the infirmities which so generally embitter the last years of protracted life. His loss, however, is not the less painful to me, as no circumstance can ever weaken my recollection of the obligations I owe to his kindness and care of my education. It is a matter of great additional regret to me that he did not revisit England; not only that I might have assured him personally, that the many busy and interesting scenes which have marked my life, since our separation, had in no respect impaired my sentiments towards him; but also from the idea, that he would have found in my present situation much that would have been gratifying to his affection.

“ Yours sincerely,

“ W. H.”

The death of Dr. Gem proved the immediate cause of Mr. Huskisson's becoming the proprietor of Earham, in the county of Sussex, for many years the favourite residence of his old friend Mr. Hayley, and better known from the frequent mention made of it in the Life of Cowper. Dr. Gem bequeathed to Mr. Huskisson his estate in Worcestershire, to which he was much attached, and appointed him residuary legatee. Among other property which thus devolved to him, was

a mortgage upon Eartham; and as Mr. Hayley had lately removed to a villa which he had built at Felpham, in the hopes of finding the proximity to the sea more congenial to the declining health of his son, and was desirous to part with Eartham, it was agreed that, upon the payment of a small additional sum, Mr. Huskisson should become the purchaser.

In 1799, he had married the youngest daughter of Admiral Milbanke;—an union, in every respect, most gratifying to his friends, and which proved to himself a source of unchequered and increasing happiness, till it was torn asunder by the dreadful catastrophe which has left her no other worldly consolation, than the remembrance of the virtues which adorned him, and that which may be gathered from the universal sympathy of the world, which deplores, and participates in, her loss.

There are some persons who are recorded never to have gone into action without being wounded. Mr. Huskisson seems to have laboured under a similar fatality in regard to accidents, from his earliest infancy to that fatal one which closed his career. As a child, he fractured his arm;—a few days before his marriage, his horse fell with him, and he was severely hurt;—soon after, he was knocked down by the pole of a carriage, just at the entrance to the Horse Guards;—in the autumn of 1801, being then in Scotland at the Duke of

Athol's, he missed his distance in attempting to leap the moat, and gave himself a most violent sprain of the ankle, accompanied with a considerable laceration of some of the tendons and ligaments of his foot, and it was many weeks before he recovered sufficiently to leave Scotland. Indeed, the effects of this accident were visible in his gait during the remainder of his life. He afterwards fractured his arm by a fall from his horse at Petworth; and again, in 1817, by his carriage being overturned. On this occasion, none of his surgeons could discover the precise nature of the mischief, but Sir Astley Cooper was of opinion that the bone was split from the fracture up to the joint. The recovery was slow, and his sufferings very severe; as all kinds of experiments were employed to prevent the joint from stiffening. In spite of every exertion, he never recovered the full use of his arm, and a visible alteration in the spirit and elasticity of his carriage resulted from the injury. He was constantly encountering accidents of minor importance, and the frequency of them, joined to a frame enfeebled from the severe illnesses under which he suffered during his latter years, had given rise to a certain hesitation in his movements, wherever any crowd or obstacle impeded him, which may, perhaps, in some degree have led to that last misfortune, which, to his friends, and to the country, may well be termed irreparable.

(At the general election in 1802, he offered himself as a candidate for Dover: but, though supported by the good wishes and influence of the Lord Warden, he was defeated by Mr. Spencer Smith, the government candidate, whose brother, Sir Sydney, got possession of the church (in which the election was then held), with his boat's crew, and effectually blockaded all approach to the voters in the opposite interest. After this defeat, he did not come into Parliament till 1804.

In the month of February in that year a vacancy occurred in the representation of Liskeard; Mr. Eliot, the sitting member, having succeeded to the peerage on the death of his brother, Lord Eliot. Mr. Huskisson was induced to offer himself, and was opposed by Mr. Thomas Sheridan. Owing to some mismanagement in forwarding the writ, the contest proved more severe than had been anticipated, and a double return was made. A petition was presented by Mr. Huskisson, which had to pass through three Committees, before a final decision was obtained in his favour. During the interval, Mr. Addington had been driven from the helm by the united attacks of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; and an attempt was made to give to the country a powerful and efficient Ministry, which should embrace the friends of both those great statesmen. But difficulties arising which were deemed insurmountable, Mr. Pitt undertook to form an

Administration, excluding as well Mr. Fox and the Whigs, as Lord Grenville and his adherents. Under this arrangement, Mr. Huskisson was appointed one of the Secretaries of the Treasury.

The second Administration of Mr. Pitt was clouded abroad by the disastrous overthrow of the third Coalition; whilst at home the impeachment of Lord Melville, and his own declining strength, cast a shade of weakness and discomfiture over his Government, in strong and mortifying contrast with the days of his former power. The glories of Trafalgar, indeed, outshone the disgrace of Ulm, and cast a bright but expiring halo round the last days of the Statesman; but on his death in January 1806, the feeble remains of the Cabinet gave way before the mere anticipation of the formidable phalanx opposed to them, and "All the Talents" assumed the reins of Government.

Mr. Huskisson now became an active member of the Opposition, and shewed himself a shrewd and vigilant observer of the proceedings of Ministers. His attention was particularly directed to their financial measures; and in the month of July he moved a string of resolutions relating to public accounts, which were approved of, and agreed to, by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Henry Petty.

Parliament having been dissolved in the autumn of this year, Mr. Huskisson was again returned

for Liskeard. On the formation of the Duke of Portland's Government in the April following, he resumed his situation as Secretary of the Treasury, and the new Administration having deemed it advisable to appeal to the sense of the country, and to call a fresh Parliament, he became member for Harwich; which place he continued to represent, till the general election in 1812.

Notwithstanding that fourteen years had elapsed since the commencement of his public career—during the far greater portion of which he had been a member of the House of Commons, and held active important official situations—Mr. Huskisson had hitherto almost invariably refrained from entering the lists as a general debater, and had been contented to owe his reputation to his clear and intimate knowledge and skill in the transaction of business. He may be supposed to have been so long restrained from the exhibition of his great and varied attainments, upon questions well calculated for their successful display, by that constitutional diffidence which has been already mentioned as one of the most marked characteristics of his boyhood, and which never abandoned him through life; for it has been remarked, by those well capable of forming an unprejudiced judgment, that even in the most elaborate and powerful Speeches of his later years, when in full possession of the attention of the House, and cheered on by their admiration, he always seemed re-

luctant to give the reins to his imagination, and studiously to draw back, as though trenching on forbidden ground, whenever he became aware that he was departing from that close and argumentative style of oratory, which was based upon the most profound calculations, and upon the most extensive, curious, and accurate information and research. Yet in spite of this rigid self-control, it would be easy to point out in his speeches many passages worthy of the greatest orators, and conveyed in the purest spirit of eloquence.

The Committee appointed, in 1807, to enquire into the means of reducing the Public Expenditure, had suggested that a new arrangement should be made between the Public and the Bank of England. Upon the change of Government, the task of carrying this recommendation into effect, devolved, of course, upon Mr. Perceval; who, early in the session of 1808, brought the whole transaction under the consideration of Parliament, and proposed some Resolutions founded upon it, which were agreed to without a division. The letters which passed between the Treasury and the Bank upon this occasion, and which gave evident signs of superior talent, and of a most perfect acquaintance with the subject, necessarily bore the signature of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the reputation of Mr. Huskisson as a financier and statesman received an immense addition, from the important share which he was universally understood

to have had in preparing the Correspondence on the part of the Government, and in conducting the negotiation to a satisfactory termination.

In the long debates which took place respecting the charges brought against the Duke of York, as Commander-in-Chief, he bore little or no share; but when Colonel Wardle, a day or two before the close of the session of 1809, came forward with a sweeping motion relative to Public Economy, Mr. Huskisson appears, for the first time, as a principal in an important general debate, and on a subject embracing the widest field for discussion. The deep attention with which his reply to Colonel Wardle was heard, demonstrated at once the intrinsic merits of the speech, and the high rank to which the speaker had won his way in the estimation of the House.*

In the spring of this year, indeed, a very strong wish was expressed by the Duke of Richmond—then Viceroy of Ireland—that Mr. Huskisson should succeed Sir Arthur Wellesley as Secretary to that Government, and the offer was accordingly made by the Minister; but it was accompanied with such a forcible explanation of the detriment which must ensue to the interests and well carrying-on of the Government, from any arrangement which should remove him from the Office which he actually held,† and any such change was so

* See vol. i. p. 12.

† Mr. Huskisson was then one of the Joint Secretaries of the Treasury.

strongly deprecated, that Mr. Huskisson reluctantly acquiesced in the objections, and relinquished the rank and importance of the Irish Secretaryship to the wishes and accommodation of the English Government.

He might now be said to have surmounted those appalling difficulties which beset the course of a public man, who is resolved to win for himself fame and distinction, unassisted by the adventitious concomitants of rank and fortune, and to have vindicated his claim to aspire, at no distant time, to the highest offices of the State.

In recurring to the history of this period, and in reflecting upon the serious and mighty influence which it may reasonably be expected the continuance in office of two such men as Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson would have had, amid the extraordinary events which followed in such rapid succession, during the years which elapsed before they returned to power, the dissensions between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, which, in the month of September, led to the resignation of these two ministers, will ever be a matter of deepest regret.

On the retirement of Mr. Canning, Mr. Huskisson steadily resisted the earnest entreaties of Mr. Perceval to continue in the Government, and rejecting, without a moment's hesitation, all the flattering offers which were made to him, followed the fortunes of his friend. A greater or

more disinterested proof of attachment was never, perhaps, given than was manifested in this decision. From the very nature of his office, Mr. Huskisson was far removed from all participation in the causes or progress of the disagreement, which ended in such an unfortunate result; and, however closely connected by the ties of private friendship with one of the parties, his continuance in office with Mr. Perceval could not, in the remotest degree, have compromised either his public or private character. By postponing the suggestions of legitimate ambition to the dictates of friendship, he was perfectly aware that he was opening to younger competitors an opportunity of passing him in that arduous career, in which he had for so many years, and with such indefatigable exertions, been advancing, and this, too, at the critical moment when the object of his labours was almost within his view; while it was evident that the opportunity now rejected might, and probably would, be long ere it could be recalled. Uninfluenced by all these considerations, Mr. Huskisson, at the age of forty, gave to the world this convincing proof of the strength and purity of that regard for Mr. Canning, both as a friend and as a minister, which ended only in death,—a proof which was subsequently renewed, on more than one occasion, and with a similar sacrifice of all personal ambition.

After a fruitless attempt to obtain the assistance

of Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, in forming a combined and extended government, the Administration was partially remodelled. Mr. Perceval united in himself the office of First Lord of the Treasury, vacant by the retirement of the Duke of Portland, to that of Chancellor of the Exchequer,—Lord Liverpool changed from the Home to the War department, vice Lord Castlereagh, and thus made way for Mr. Ryder in the Home;—Lord Bathurst replaced Mr. Canning in the Foreign, until an answer could be received from the Marquess Wellesley, then ambassador in Spain, to whom an offer of it was made, which his Lordship accepted,—and Mr. Wharton succeeded Mr. Huskisson as Secretary of the Treasury.

Whenever the occurrences of these times shall be calmly and considerately written, the Historian will probably pause with something like astonishment, when he weighs and examines the component materials of an Administration, to which was committed the conduct of a struggle, the most fearful and gigantic recorded in the chronicles of nations. But such digressions suit not with the purpose of the present narrative.

In the session of 1810, Mr. Huskisson's parliamentary exertions were principally limited to some strong observations on the Army Estimates, in which he strenuously argued the necessity of economy, and of any practicable reduction,—points which he again pressed on the consideration

of Government in the discussions which ensued on the Budget. This conduct drew down some sharp comments from Mr. Whitbread, who, after complimenting his abilities, and regretting the loss which the public had sustained by the manner in which "his place was then occupied rather than supplied," reproached him for the inconsistency of his present language, with that which he had held while in office the preceding year;—a reproach which Mr. Huskisson ably repelled, and which he would probably have altogether escaped, at least from that quarter, had he not, with Mr. Canning, declined to join in a general opposition to the measures of a government of which they had so recently formed part.

But the most important event, as relating to the fame and character of Mr. Huskisson, which occurred in the course of this year, was the appearance of his Pamphlet on the Currency System,* in which he displayed the most consummate knowledge of this complicated and much disputed subject, in all its various bearings,—the soundest and most enlightened views, and the most prophetic insight into the dangers and difficulties, which must ensue from a long and obstinate perseverance in the existing method of managing the financial resources of the country. This publication was eminently successful, and confirmed to him the reputation of being the first financier of the age. The apparent ease and rapidity with which this

* See vol. i. p. 50.

elaborate performance was composed, still live in the memory of some of those who happened to be at Eartham when it was written ; as well as the unaffected manner with which he would join the party in the morning, and submit to their remarks the successive sheets, which he had prepared since they had separated on the preceding night.

When we reflect on the evident bias for the study of finance, which he had testified even from his early youth, as shewn by his Speech at the Club of 1789,—a study for which, from the singular powers of calculation, and from the clearness and depth of intellect with which nature had gifted him, he was so peculiarly adapted,—it cannot but appear somewhat extraordinary, and it is certainly much to be regretted, both for the public and himself, that he should never, in his whole career, have presided as Chief over a department, in which his views and plans of finance might have been fully developed and carried into execution. There is every reason to suppose that a great simplification of system, as well as in the details of management, would have resulted from the guidance of his master-hand, and that this simplification would have been naturally attended with considerable advantages, in point of economy in the collection ; while his own words, in the last session of Parliament, authorize the belief, that a change in the principles and distribution of our present burthensome taxation would have been,

particularly in later years, strongly advocated by his influence.

In the debates on Mr. Perceval's Regency Bill, Mr. Huskisson adopted the same policy and the same line of conduct as that pursued by Mr. Canning, and contented himself with stating his opinions once in the course of the discussions. When the Bill had finally passed, it is well known that a considerable uncertainty prevailed as to what would be the determination of the Prince Regent with respect to ministerial arrangements, and so strong was the expectation that a change would take place, and so far were the preparatory steps for such a change advanced, that, in the month of January 1811, Mr. Huskisson received a communication, through a mutual friend, from the person to whom the Prince Regent was supposed to have entrusted the necessary powers for making the new arrangements, intimating a wish to know how far he might feel inclined to lend his assistance towards the formation of a new administration. To this communication an answer was made, through the same channel, in the following words : —“ A proposal to myself separately, and which I should conceive to imply the exclusion of those with whom I am personally and politically connected, is that which I could, in no shape, entertain. A proposal which was not thus exclusive, I should have no difficulty in considering with the person to whom it would, in that case, naturally

be made, and my decision would be regulated upon that joint consideration."

It is evident that, in using these expressions, allusion was made to Mr. Canning; and in thus declining, at once, even to entertain a proposal exclusively addressed to himself, Mr. Huskisson renewed the proof of his unshaken determination to adhere to the fortunes of that statesman, which he had already exhibited in 1809. Whether any negotiations of a more extensive nature were ever contemplated, in consequence of this refusal on his part to treat alone, it is unnecessary to inquire; as all further steps became useless, by the decision of the Prince Regent to continue the existing Administration.

In the course of this year, Mr. Perceval having proposed a Select Committee to inquire into the State of Commercial Credit, Mr. Horner moved, that the name of Mr. Huskisson should be added to the list. This proposal was declined by Mr. Huskisson; who stated, that he did not conceive the existing distress to proceed from any interruption of public credit, but rather from a spirit of overtrading; and his objection was enforced by Mr. Canning, who observed that, from the narrow description of the investigation proposed, the qualities for which his friend was particularly distinguished were not necessary—qualities which would only have been of essential advantage, if the Committee had been about to inquire, not

only into the immediate, but into the remote, causes of the then state of commercial credit. The motion of Mr. Horner was consequently abandoned.

It was in the progress of this session also, that the celebrated debate took place upon Mr. Horner's Resolutions on the Report of the Bullion Committee. Mr. Huskisson rose to reply to Mr. Vansittart, who had called upon him to answer, "in what sense the term depreciation, as used by the Committee, was to be understood?"—an answer which was returned, as Mr. Canning afterwards remarked, "in one sense at least, to the complete satisfaction of him who had asked for it." Mr. Huskisson's speech was distinguished by the force and perspicuity of its arguments, and by the soundness of its principles, and it was evident that he was dealing with a subject of which he was completely master.*

This speech, and those of Mr. Canning in the same debate, and in one which followed a few nights after, on Mr. Vansittart's resolutions, will be found to comprise all that the deepest and most patient research, united to the clearest intellect, could bring to bear upon the question. What share Mr. Huskisson might have had in the masterly displays of his friend cannot now be ascertained; but there is every reason to infer, from past and succeeding circumstances, from the tendency of all the known and favourite pursuits and studies

* See vol. i. p. 188.

of both, that, though the eloquent beauty of the language, the polished wit and poignant sarcasm, may have been the undivided claim of Mr. Canning, yet that in the elaborate exhibition of financial science, in the lucid explanations of the most complicated details of figures and calculations, and in the masterly manner of treating this abstruse and laborious subject, he may have owed something to the genius of him, whose life had been dedicated to the attainment of this important branch of political knowledge.

Early in 1812, Lord Wellesley threw up his office, on a difference of opinion between himself and his colleagues respecting the Catholic Question, and the conduct of the war in the Peninsula; and arrangements had scarcely been concluded by which Lord Castlereagh was to succeed him, when Mr. Perceval fell by the hand of an assassin. In the distribution of the parliamentary grant to the family of this excellent man, Mr. Huskisson, with a considerate kindness which did honour to his head and heart, urged that some distinction should be made between the younger children and the eldest son, and moved as an amendment to the original resolution, that the Prince Regent should be enabled to grant him £1,000 a-year during the life-time of Mrs. Perceval, which amendment was carried by a great majority. This pension subsequently merged when Mr. Perceval was appointed one of the Tellers of the Exchequer, and

any additional charge to the public was thus avoided.

On the death of Mr. Perceval, an address for a strong and efficient administration was carried in the House of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Stuart Wortley, and the royal commands were in consequence given, first to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, and afterwards to Lord Moira, for the formation of a combined ministry. These having failed, the task was committed to Lord Liverpool, and proposals were made to Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning, and all but accepted, when fresh difficulties arose, and the whole negotiation fell to the ground. Thus were the prospects of Mr. Huskisson again annihilated; who, according to the proposed arrangement, was to have gone to Ireland with the new Lord Lieutenant, and to have united in himself the two high offices of Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer in that country.

It is worthy of remark, that this was the second time in which he had been disappointed of the post of Secretary for Ireland, and that, on this occasion, so high was the sense entertained of his abilities, and so great the desire to secure his assistance, that it was intended to combine in his favour two offices, which, up to that time, and subsequently, till the Irish Chancellorship of the Exchequer was merged in that of England, were considered perfectly distinct. On the failure of

the negotiation, the old separation was continued, and Mr. Peel appointed Secretary, and Mr. Vesey Fitz-Gerald Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the Irish Government.

Without for a moment impugning the purity of his motives, or undervaluing the extent of the sacrifice which Mr. Canning judged it incumbent upon him to make at this conjuncture, it is impossible not to regret, that he should have deemed such a sacrifice necessary for his personal honour and consistency. Even at this moment, all the consequences of that fatal decision are not, perhaps, fully disclosed, and cannot be duly appreciated. Yet amid the growling of the storm, which now clouds the political horizon from north to south,—from the frozen steppes of Russia to the sunny shores of Naples,—we cannot but lament, that the same generous master-spirit which swayed the councils of Britain in 1826 and 1827, was not destined to preside over those at Vienna in 1814 and 1815. The world is now reaping the bitter fruits of that unprincipled and short-sighted policy, which, with a rashness equally feeble and presumptuous, then parcelled out Europe by weight and measure, regardless of the wishes or wants of the people, and frittered away, without any solid advantage being gained either for this country or for the general interests of humanity, that single opportunity, which a combination of the most unforeseen events could alone have afforded for

making England the arbitress of the continent, and winning for her the lasting esteem and gratitude of regenerated nations.

The failure of this negotiation was attended with consequences of the most discouraging nature to the advancement of Mr. Huskisson; and as the grounds on which it was broken off are understood to have been purely personal to Mr. Canning, and such as in no way involved the abandonment of any political principles, the adherence of his friends to his decision was equally flattering to him, and honourable to their own disinterestedness.

Already, in 1809, Mr. Huskisson by relinquishing his office had made way for rival candidates for political honours; and his rejection of any arrangement in which Mr. Canning was not comprised, now once more enabled others to get the start of him. Owing to these circumstances, the aspiring fortunes of Mr. Peel and Mr. Robinson, both younger and less experienced in business, took an ascendancy which, for many years, threw Mr. Huskisson comparatively into the background.

A fresh cast of characters now became requisite. Lord Liverpool was named first Lord of the Treasury, and was considered the Prime Minister, Mr. Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Sidmouth and Lord Bathurst Secretaries for the Home and Colonial Departments. In June, the new finance minister produced his

Budget, when Mr. Huskisson seized the opportunity of again enforcing the necessity of adopting every practicable method of retrenching the expenditure, and equalizing it with the public income; at the same time admitting, that the plan proposed was as acceptable as any measure of that character could be, in the actual state of the resources of the country.

Upon the dissolution of Parliament, in the autumn of this year, he received an invitation from many of the most respectable inhabitants of Chichester to succeed Mr. Thomas (who had signified his intention of retiring), as representative for that city, on what is there called the Blue, or independent interest. Nothing could be more gratifying than this invitation, nothing more flattering than the reception which he met with, both on his canvas, and at the hustings, where he was returned without opposition. Having resided for several years in the vicinity of his new constituents, he could not but be sensible that the selection of him conveyed the strongest proof of the estimation in which he was held, both in public and private life; and the circumstance of his being at the time out of office, and the little prospect which was visible of his return to it, enhanced the value of the compliment, in a way alike honourable to the electors of Chichester and to himself.

Parliament assembled in November, when Mr. Huskisson once more exposed and controverted

the notorious Resolution of Mr. Vansittart, declaring that a pound note and a shilling were equivalent to a guinea, which the latter pertinaciously maintained, in the face of the flagrant proofs to the contrary which daily occurred.

In the month of March following, he took a luminous and scrutinizing view of the Finances of the country, and of the Resolutions proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and stated the nature of the alterations which he wished to see introduced. For this speech he received the highest compliments from Mr. Baring, Mr. Henry Thornton, Mr. Tierney, and other members of the House most conversant with the subject.* It is full of those peculiar excellencies which mark all what, in order to avoid periphrasis, may be familiarly termed the professional speeches of Mr. Huskisson.

When the question of the existing Corn Laws was brought under the notice of the House in this session, he distinguished himself in the debate which arose on certain resolutions moved by Sir Henry Parnell; and it was on this occasion that he first proposed a scale of graduated prohibitory duties, which, in after years, gave rise to so much discussion, when they had been matured by the wisdom and experience of Lord Liverpool. It is worthy too of remark, that even at this period Mr. Huskisson objected to the

* See vol. i. p. 273.

propositions of Sir Henry Parnell, "as proceeding too much on the principle of giving the monopoly of the English market to the English corn grower."

In the summer of 1814, Mr. Canning accepted the Embassy to Lisbon. It has been lately — stated, in a work of great authority, that he did so reluctantly, and that he was only "induced to do so, because the Government had made it the condition of enrolling in its ranks those of his personal friends, who had attached themselves to his political fortunes."* Who the friends were, for whom Mr. Canning sacrificed himself on this occasion, it is not pretended to guess. But as Mr. Huskisson, it is believed, was the only one of those friends who was appointed to the chief direction of a department, an inference might be drawn, that it was for his advancement principally, that Mr. Canning took upon himself the unpopularity which was attached to the Lisbon Embassy. This inference is distinctly repelled on the part of Mr. Huskisson's friends. If any faith is to be placed in the anecdotes of the times, it would be contradicted by what was then currently reported, and often alluded to, even in Parliament; namely, that Mr. Canning had, not long before his appointment, released his adherents from all political allegiance, and, as Mr. Whitbread sarcastically

* Political Life of Mr. Canning, by A. G. Stapleton, Esq., v. i. p. 70.

expressed it, told them "to shift for themselves." But without attaching any importance to what was possibly merely an idle report, it must appear rather incredible, that no expedient could have been devised, by which the services of Mr. Huskisson could be made palatable to the Government, short of endangering Mr. Canning's public reputation; or that Government should have been, all of a sudden, so blind to the value of the former, as to have made his admission to office contingent upon the appointment of the latter to a post, the acceptance of which he was well aware would enable his enemies "to misrepresent and calumniate" him. On the contrary, it is only due to the memory of Mr. Huskisson to say, that, however closely united to Mr. Canning in private and in political friendship, he has a fair and indisputable right to be considered as the worker-out of his own greatness. His connexion with Mr. Canning may have retarded—it certainly did not hasten,—his rise to the highest offices of the State.

But whilst, as far as Mr. Huskisson's advancement is concerned, the sacrifice of Mr. Canning is rejected as unnecessary, the advantage which the Government secured by his moral support, and by the unequivocal proof of approbation which he gave in consenting to the formation of a connexion between them, is fully admitted. And, perhaps, among the many eloquent harangues

of that great man, there is none in which he displayed higher powers of argument, or carried stronger conviction to the minds and prejudices of those opposed to him, than in his triumphant defence of himself on this very appointment, when attacked by Mr. Lambton in a formal motion on the subject.

To return from this digression. In August, Mr. Huskisson succeeded Lord Glenbervie as Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and was sworn of the Privy Council. Notwithstanding a partial clamour which was raised about the Corn Laws, his re-election at Chichester met with no opposition; for a more intimate intercourse with his constituents had only increased the attachment and confidence which they felt towards him.

The new office in which he was placed, afforded him an opportunity of shewing to the world the versatility of his talents, and the facility with which his comprehensive genius could apply itself and descend to any subject. The improvement of the Crown Forests became the great object of his care. He obtained an accurate insight into the best methods of planting and managing them, and made himself conversant with the nature of the different soils, the particular description of trees to which they were best adapted, the various treatment which the plants demanded in different situations and at different periods, and with the growth and quality of the

timber. All this he did with a readiness and a discrimination which astonished, as much as it gratified, the old and experienced officers of the different forests, whose duty it was to accompany him on his rounds, during his annual visits of inspection to their respective stations. It is no exaggeration to say, that they may still be heard to dwell with admiration on the interest which he took, and the unusual knowledge which he evinced, in the direction of this department, and that they will even now speak with regret of the natural kindness and unaffected simplicity of his habits.

Such, indeed, was the attraction which he possessed in all his intercourse with them, that his approaching residence among them was always anticipated with feelings of genuine pleasure. Those who have only been accustomed to regard him as the expounder and commentator of the most abstruse ramifications of Political Economy, or to see him engrossed in devising new plans for the improvement of Commerce, or for extending the happiness and prosperity of distant Colonies, may have some difficulty in imagining the interest with which, like another Evelyn, he would listen to every suggestion for the success of the young plantations, and watch over their annual progress. These were his relaxations, and in these he found a compensation for the fatiguing details and uninteresting, and equally ungrateful, }

duties of the other departments of his situation. To these he gave a careful and conscientious attention; but it must be acknowledged, that they were far from affording, either for himself or for the public, a fitting or beneficial field for the exercise of his superior powers.

Before Mr. Canning sailed for Portugal, he thought it proper to pay a visit to his friends and constituents at Liverpool; and as he had prevailed upon Mr. Huskisson to become his substitute, and to transact his part of the parliamentary business of that town during his absence, it was determined that they should proceed thither together, in order that Mr. Huskisson might have an opportunity of making acquaintance with the principal inhabitants. They were received with the most flattering demonstrations of respect and admiration, and their visit was marked with a succession of festivities. Could the dark veil which mercifully shadows our feeble vision have been then withdrawn, how would Mr. Canning have shuddered at the fatal scene which was destined to perpetuate, even beyond this life, that connexion, the foundations of which he was then laying amid gay hopes and bright anticipations! What would have been his feelings, could he have foreseen that he was then assisting to prepare a tomb for his unfortunate friend!

In the course of 1815, the subject of the Corn Laws, which had been partially discussed, and

then postponed, in the preceding year, was brought forward by the Government, and long debates arose on the policy of making such alterations, as might be necessary to adapt them to the demands and exigencies of the present times. An Act was accordingly passed for regulating the importation of foreign Corn. Until this period, positive prohibition had been unknown to our Corn Laws, and importation was never permitted without the payment of some duty. The law was now changed, and an absolute prohibition against the introduction of every description of foreign grain into the consumption of the United Kingdom was substituted, whenever the average prices should be below,—together with unlimited freedom of importation, without any duty whatever, when the prices should be above,—certain specified rates. Subsequent experience has proved that the system thus adopted was erroneous, and that its operation was productive of much evil in the course of its twelve years' operation.

Although the question was one beset with difficulties, and which had the double disadvantage of exposing those who came to the arrangement of it, with fair and moderate views, at once to the blind fury of the populace, and to the unforgiving jealousy of the landed interest, whose mutual disappointment in their equally unreasonable expectations found a single point of agreement in a cordial hatred of the supporters of a middle

course ; and although he was not called upon from his official situation to draw down on himself this mass of unpopularity, Mr. Huskisson nevertheless took a prominent part in these discussions. He seems, indeed, to have had extraordinary pleasure in grappling with subjects of this arduous and complicated kind, and to have found in them something congenial to his nature. Diffident of his own powers, and free from anything like a feeling of rivalry or jealousy, he should seem to have systematically relinquished all topics, whether foreign or domestic, which demanded or allowed the use or display of the more dazzling and imposing graces of public speaking, to the splendid eloquence of Mr. Canning. It is certain at least, that, during the life of that great man, he seldom, if ever, mixed in the discussions on Foreign Policy, however tempting the occasion ; and that, although invariably favourable to the abolition of the Slave Trade, and to the Claims of the Roman Catholics, he generally limited his support of them—with the exception of a speech in favour of the latter in 1825—to a silent vote.

In thus devoting his mind to the study of Political Economy, he may have been impelled, not merely by a natural predilection, but also by a conviction that, in pursuing this thorny and unattractive path, he was likely to meet fewer competitors for the prize, and that the combina-

tion of his own intimate acquaintance with this abstruse department of politics,—including Finance, Currency, and Commerce,—with the unrivalled endowments and enlightened views of Mr. Canning in the wide range of foreign and domestic policy, would greatly strengthen their mutual influence, and extend their means of benefiting both their own country and the world, whenever they might be called upon to take part in the administration of public affairs. But, whatever may have been the motives which induced him, through so many years, to direct his exertions in Parliament to what are usually esteemed the least attractive branches of political knowledge, the public have no reason to regret the decision; for it was during these years of careful and anxious investigation and deep reflection, amid the chances and disappointments which, unfortunately for the country, retarded his rise to the higher offices of the Government, that his mind was unceasingly occupied in preparing the ground for, and sowing the seeds of, those Improvements, which he had afterwards the satisfaction of bringing to a prosperous maturity.

The Corn Laws were not the only difficult question of domestic policy which occupied the attention of Government in 1815 and 1816. The Bank restriction, which had been continued until July in the latter year, was brought under the consideration of Parliament in the month of May;

when Mr. Horner moved, that a Select Committee should be appointed for inquiring into the expediency of restoring the Cash Payments of the Bank of England, and the safest and most advantageous means of effecting such restoration. In the Debate which ensued, Mr. Huskisson declared, that he still retained the opinions which he had formerly expressed, when the Bullion Committee had terminated its labours. No inquiry, he said, was necessary on the first point embraced by the Motion. All agreed that there was no security for property, no stability in public credit, no confidence in trade, no mode of adjusting the rights and consulting the interests of all classes of society, without a circulation rendered steady by possessing a permanent and universal value: but he thought that the task of restoring the precious metals should be left to the discretion of the Bank, with a declaration, that the Parliament expected the resumption of Cash Payments should not be delayed beyond two years; and a clause declaratory of such an expectation was accordingly adopted. The truth appears to have been that, in the interval since the former discussions on this subject, the Bank had not only neglected preparations for resuming their payments in cash, but had actually extended their issues; so that the Government found itself compelled to prolong the restriction till July 1818.

Mr. Huskisson took every opportunity of express-

ing the satisfaction, with which he looked forward to the arrival of the period fixed for the resumption of cash payments, and his sanguine hope that it would not be delayed beyond the time contemplated by Parliament. His penetration, however, was at no loss to discover, and his candour did not allow him to disguise, that the interval which must elapse between the withdrawing, or absorbing, of a large portion of the excessive circulation of the country, and the return to another state of currency, must be a time of severe pressure, not only in this country but all over Europe. To this period, when the state of the Currency and of the Country Banks was to be placed on a more secure footing, he again alluded, when arguing in favour of the set of Finance Resolutions moved by Mr. Charles Grant, and carried in opposition to those of Mr. Tierney, at the close of the Session of 1817; and he expressed his earnest hope, that everything would be done to prepare the country for the reception of more liberal commercial arrangements, in order to afford some counterpoise to the pressure which he foresaw impending, and to disarm the jealousy of foreign countries.

In the debate which followed Lord Althorp's attempt, in 1818, for a repeal of the Leather Tax, which was defeated by a very small majority, we find Mr. Huskisson opposing the Bill, and enforcing his opposition, on the ground, that no tax could be repealed with full benefit to the

public, except direct taxes; and that if any reduction could possibly be made, these ought to be the first to attract consideration.

When, in this year, Mr. Tierney moved a Resolution, involving the much agitated question of an immediate resumption of Cash Payments, Mr. Huskisson successfully advocated a further delay. He shewed that such a measure was then incompatible with the existing state of affairs, and that the House could do nothing more than declare the time for resuming such payments, leaving the care of providing the necessary means to the Bank itself. But while he maintained that the present was not the season for removing the restriction, he avowed that a difference existed between him and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on certain points. This led him to defend and eulogize the Report made by the Bullion Committee; which he characterized as containing a perspicuous statement of facts and well connected inferences still unanswered, and he expressed his regret that the distinguished individual who had prepared it—Mr. Horner—was not living to assist the present deliberations with the force of his reasoning and the accuracy of his judgment.

In the autumn of this year Parliament was dissolved, and Mr. Huskisson re-elected for Chichester without any opposition.

On the appointment of the Finance Committee, at the commencement of the Session of 1819, Mr.

1818

Huskisson's abilities, and his knowledge of all the intricacies of the subject, were too conspicuous not to ensure his name being included in the list; and it has been supposed, that the influence which his great talents and intimate acquaintance with finance secured to him, proved of the utmost importance to Ministers in surmounting the difficulties which opposed them. The masterly Exposition which he made, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the present Lord Bexley—brought forward his string of Resolutions, relating to public Income and Expenditure, as founded upon the Report of that Committee, probably saved the Government on that occasion; or, should this be thought too bold an assertion, certainly contributed very essentially to mitigate the opposition which they encountered. It has been said, that Mr. Huskisson gave a financial view of each European Exchequer, and detailed the various measures then in progress among the different Continental States, with an ease and fidelity which excited general surprise and admiration. Without disguising the difficulties of our situation, or attempting to mystify or delude the country with vague calculations, he drew from our very embarrassments fresh arguments for that economy and exertion, which alone could ultimately enable us to weather them. The whole of this convincing address* is worthy the deepest attention, not only

* See vol. ii. p. 28.

for the valuable information and sound doctrines with which it abounds, but for the consummate skill with which, while defending the general policy of the Committee, he prudently disarmed his opponents, by conceding to them as much as possible, and admitted that the measure in consideration could only be justified upon the principle of necessity. It is much to be regretted that this Speech was never revised by Mr. Huskisson, and that no notes of it are in existence; for the report of it can convey only a very feeble idea of the impression which it caused on its delivery.

The death of George the Third having rendered it necessary to summon a new Parliament, Mr. Huskisson was again returned for Chichester, with the same marks of attachment and approbation which had been bestowed upon him on the three preceding occasions. The Session opened in April, and early in May, Mr. Baring, on presenting a Petition from the Merchants of London, respecting the Restrictions which impeded commercial enterprise, made that celebrated speech, to which Mr. Huskisson so successfully referred, when he vindicated the measures of Government on a subsequent occasion.

In the course of this year, Agricultural Distress again occupied much of the attention of the House, and a Committee was appointed, on the motion of Mr. Holme Sumner, to consider the various Petitions connected with this subject; but an

instruction was afterwards moved and carried by Mr. Robinson, "confining the inquiry to the mode of ascertaining, returning, and calculating the average prices of corn in the twelve maritime districts, under the provisions of the existing Corn Laws, and to any frauds which might be committed, in violation of any of the provisions of the said Laws;" which restriction, of course, rendered the labours of this Committee of comparatively little importance. In the following year, Ministers having withdrawn their opposition to such a measure, a Committee was appointed, on the motion of Mr. Gooch, for a more extended inquiry. Of this Committee, Mr. Huskisson was the most active ministerial member; and the long and elaborate Report, which was the result of their labours, has been understood to have emanated principally from him. It has been often supposed, too, that in the prominent part which he took in this Committee, and in the steadiness with which he urged and defended a more liberal system in respect to the Corn Laws, may be discovered the explanation of that mingled feeling of suspicion and fear, with which that party, which denominates itself the Landed Interest, subsequently appears to have watched all his measures.

When towards the end of this year, Mr. Canning, from circumstances and considerations wholly distinct from general policy, and indeed purely personal, retired from the administration, Mr. Hus-

kisson did not follow his example ; not from any attachment to his own office, but because he saw that to resign at that moment would have been to act most unfairly by Mr. Canning, in giving to his retirement a character which did not belong to it, and might prove embarrassing to the Government.

Although not a member of the Cabinet, and consequently, not involved in whatever responsibility attached to the proceedings of the ministers against the Queen, Mr. Huskisson did not fear to incur his share of the unpopularity which those proceedings had entailed upon them ; nor did he shrink from their defence, when, early in the session of 1821, Lord Tavistock moved a resolution strongly condemnatory of their conduct : he, however, declared that he had deprecated the inquiry from the outset, feeling that the result of it must be to lower the general tone of moral and religious feeling in the country, but that to assent now to the motion of the noble Lord would be to declare that, in the eyes of the Commons of England, her Majesty's conduct had been, if not praiseworthy, at least blameless. Upon this occasion, he prefaced his speech by stating his reasons for breaking through the practice, which he had observed during a long parliamentary life, of declining questions of this general nature, and commented largely upon this difficult and delicate subject.

In the progress of the session, the Government encountered much opposition, and was exposed to

several severe shocks, from the united attacks of the old Whig party, strengthened by the Country interest. Several proposals were made to repeal various taxes which pressed heavily upon the country, and the House and Window Duties were the first selected. Their repeal was resisted by the Government; but Mr. Huskisson, while he argued against it, admitted, in pointed terms, the propriety of further economy in preparing the Estimates, if it could be shewn where further economy was practicable. Notwithstanding this conciliatory admission, and in spite of all the efforts of Government, the resolution was only lost by a majority of 26. Another and more successful attack was then made, and ministers were outvoted in an endeavour to continue the additional duties upon Malt;—a defeat which they retaliated a few nights after, when they succeeded in throwing out the Bill for their repeal by a large majority. But in June they were once more in a minority, respecting the duty on horses employed in husbandry, which was repealed by a Bill brought in by Mr. Curwen. On all these occasions, Mr. Huskisson spoke forcibly against these proposals; and as they were considered to be more especially calculated for the relief of the Agricultural Interest, and were introduced and advocated by those who regarded themselves as more peculiarly the representatives of that body, this active opposition, perhaps, may be thought

to have contributed to indispose that powerful party still further towards the principles and policy of Mr. Huskisson.

The events which had occurred in the House of Commons created a very general impression, that something must be done before the reassembling of Parliament, towards repairing the weakness which had been occasioned to the Government by the loss of Mr. Canning; and it was soon understood that this impression was not unfounded. The indifference with which Mr. Huskisson regarded his own situation has been already touched on. To his active mind, indeed, its comparative ease did anything but compensate for the—to him—irksome character of the duties belonging to it. Accordingly, in the course of this year several communications seem to have taken place, with a view to a change. Among other suggestions, the Secretaryship of Ireland was once more named, but rejected without hesitation on the part of Mr. Huskisson; who, having already, in 1809, consented to decline that office, in compliance with the urgent representations of the ministers of that day,—having been again designated for it, united with the Chancellorship of the Exchequer in 1812 (an arrangement which failed it is true, but from no fault of his), and which had been once more tendered and once more declined on Mr. Peel's resignation in 1818,—felt that he should be unmindful of what he owed to himself, and his own character, if he

submitted to become the successor of those, who though his juniors, both in years and in the public service, were now, from circumstances not within his controul, placed, or to be placed, in higher situations at home. Other arrangements were then proposed ; but to these either the same objection applied, or the still greater one of their pointing to offices which had too much the appearance of sinecures, and the acceptance of which might have been construed into an exchange of a place of some business for one without any, from the unworthy motive of adding a thousand a year to his official income. Fresh difficulties arising to any alteration satisfactory to himself, Mr. Huskisson determined to sacrifice his own fair pretensions for the desirable object of attaining an increase of strength to the Government, and abandoned his intention of immediate resignation ; but he did not do so without having recorded his strong sense of the injustice which had postponed for a time the reward to which he was so well entitled, both from his long and zealous exertions in support of the Government, and from his acknowledged efficiency as a man of business ; or without making it known to the Minister, that in consenting to retain his present appointment, he had unwillingly deferred to the judgment of his friends, and to the fear that an invidious and unfair construction,—a construction possibly injurious to others,—might, and probably would, be put upon his resignation.

All these ministerial discussions and negotiations terminated, as is well known, in the appointment of Mr. Peel to the Home office in the room of Lord Sidmouth, and in that of Mr. Wynn to the Board of Control; which latter, with some minor changes, secured the support of the Grenville party; and the new arrangement was announced about Christmas 1821.

The debates on the distress which pressed heavily upon the Agricultural interest, and which, in its consequences, affected the whole country, were renewed, shortly after the reassembling of Parliament in February 1822; when Lord Londonderry moved the revival of the Committee of the preceding year, and gave notice, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, without loss of time, bring forward a proposal for enabling the Bank to issue four million of Exchequer Bills in loans to different parishes, and also a reduction of the Malt tax.

In the debate which followed upon this notice of the noble Marquis, Mr. Huskisson's speech must be deemed one of the most important; embracing as it does a variety of those topics, with which he was, perhaps, more conversant than any other statesman of his time. In consequence of what passed on this occasion, and, subsequently, on the motion for the appointment of the Committee, it became necessary for him to explain the part which he had taken in preparing the Agri-

cultural Report of the preceding year. Having done so, and vindicated himself from the charges of having mystified the members of that Committee, he signified his intention to abstain from all attendance at the present one; in which determination Lord Londonderry declared that he regarded him as perfectly justified. On the 1st of April, the new Committee made their Report, and on the 29th, Lord Londonderry proposed a string of Resolutions, declaratory of the views which he, as the leading minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, entertained for the purposes of relief. These having been read, Mr. Ricardo brought forward another set, and late in the debate, Mr. Huskisson laid before the House those which he had prepared on the same subject; giving notice at the same time, that it was his intention, on the next discussion, to state the cause of the difference which would appear between his resolutions and those of the noble Marquis. On the 6th of May, Lord Londonderry moved his first, and most important resolution: it was combated by Mr. Huskisson, and, after a short debate, withdrawn.

He now felt that, having as an official servant of the Crown opposed, and successfully opposed, a proposition brought forward by the leading member of Government in the House of Commons, it was due to the chief of that Government to place his office at his disposal. Accordingly, he waited upon Lord Liverpool, and after

explaining to him what had passed, did that which he afterwards, in 1828, repeated in respect to the Duke of Wellington; namely, placed in his hands the decision, whether the penalty of such an act of insubordination was to be enforced against him. The result, as all the world knows, was as different, as the other circumstances of the case were similar; except, indeed, that Mr. Huskisson's conduct in 1822 was marked with a character of official independence, or rather mutiny, infinitely stronger than anything which arose on the case of the East Retford disfranchisement.

Connected with this topic of Agricultural distress was the motion brought forward by Mr. Western, in the month of June, for a Committee to consider of the effects which had been produced by the Act for the resumption of Cash Payments. Mr. Huskisson undertook to reply to Mr. Western; and, after a speech of singular power and effect—a speech which may be ranked among those of the first class for soundness of political principle, and conclusive reasoning—moved as an amendment, the substitution of the famous resolution of 1696, “that this House will not alter the standard of gold or silver, in fineness, weight or denomination;” an amendment which was carried by an overwhelming majority.

While Mr. Huskisson invariably and firmly resisted all attempts at tampering with the Currency, we discover, in almost all his speeches, the same

anxiety for the reduction of the Unfunded Debt, the same admission of the necessity of adopting all practicable plans of economising the Expenditure, and the same doctrine constantly laid down, that it was peculiarly incumbent upon this country not to set to foreigners the example of imposing any additional restrictions on Trade, but, on the contrary, to convince them, that it was the fixed determination of England to pursue that liberal system of Commercial Policy which had lately been so auspiciously commenced. These appear to be the great principles, the wisdom and urgency of which he laboured, on all occasions, to impress both upon Parliament and the country, and in the defence of which he was ever found ready to contribute his powerful support.

The death of Lord Londonderry in the summer of 1822, and Mr. Canning's succession to his office, though they caused no immediate alteration in Mr. Huskisson's official appointments, could not but give a great additional weight to the influence which he before possessed. Negotiations, indeed, were shortly after set on foot for a partial change in the Administration, and at the end of January 1823, Mr. Vansittart was raised to the peerage, and became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Mr. Robinson succeeded him at the Exchequer, and Mr. Huskisson was appointed President of the Board of Trade and Treasurer of the Navy. As the offer had been at first unaccompanied with a

seat in the Cabinet (which had been attached to these offices while held by Mr. Robinson), some demur arose on the part of Mr. Huskisson, which was only overcome by an assurance, that the sole obstacle to his immediate admission was not any objection to him individually, but the extreme inconvenience to public business, resulting from too great an extension of the Cabinet ; and by a positive promise, that the earliest possible opportunity should be seized to make an opening for him. On this assurance, he agreed to waive, or rather to suspend, his objection ; and, early in the following autumn, a vacancy was made in the Cabinet, to which he was immediately called.

It may, perhaps, be here asked, why the reasons which had been alleged by Mr. Huskisson, as the grounds of his declining to accede to the arrangement proposed to him towards the latter part of the year 1821, and which have before been alluded to ; namely, his unwillingness to accept an office which had been successively held by those who were his juniors in political life ; should now be altogether abandoned ? The answer is easy and simple. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that, as far back as 1809, and twice subsequently, he had been intended for the same appointment which he refused in 1821,—that, moreover, his retirement in 1809, and the failure of later attempts to recal him to office, had given to Mr. Robinson claims of precedence which

tation manifested in accepting this distinguished honour, his friends are insensible to the noble manner in which the Inhabitants of the latter place requited him for the sacrifice by an attachment, which shewed itself more strongly during each succeeding year of their connexion, and which death itself has not dissolved.* But only those who enjoyed his most

* The following letter will best explain his feelings, and the grounds on which he at last yielded to the force of circumstances.

“ Whitehall Place, Feb. 1823.

“ MY DEAR SIR ;

“ Seldom has a more reluctant task devolved upon any man, than that to which I am now driven by circumstances which I can no longer control.

“ Knowing so intimately as you do the state of my feelings in reference to my political connexion with Chichester, and the ardent desire I have so frequently expressed to you, that it might be my good fortune to have it continued during the remainder of my public life, I am sure you will do me the justice to believe, that it is not without a most painful struggle that I find myself compelled to entreat all the indulgence of my friends for the inclosed Address.

“ Among them there are many to whom, from the strongest claims of kindness and partiality, it would be my wish to give personally the same full and detailed explanation which I have given to you of the events which, without producing any change in my wishes or feelings, have, I may fairly say, in spite of both, forced me into a new career. But I am so pressed for time, that it would be quite impossible for me to write to each of them separately on the subject.

“ I know how little a public man is likely to obtain credit for sincerity, when he declares that any change in which he acquiesces has not been an object of his ambition, and is not, at the time, a source of personal gratification. That this will be the natural inference with the multitude is what I must expect. But it is to me a consolation to know, that from my habits of confidence with you I was enabled last summer, and again some weeks ago, to lay before you the real state of my mind, and that I have since had an opportunity of satisfying

intimate confidence, can declare how much he underwent before he could bring himself to a decision, or how much it cost him to abandon his former faithful friends and constituents. Nor let those faithful friends and constituents be defrauded of the just expression of gratitude which is due to them, from all who loved and admired Mr. Huskisson. The proceedings which took place, and the Address which was transmitted to him, when it became known that he did not intend to offer himself again as their representative, are too honourable to all parties to be here withheld.

you of the lengths to which, following up the feelings I then communicated to you, I carried my opposition to any change which would at present vacate my seat at all, and not less so to one that would transfer that seat from Chichester to Liverpool.

"I feel the fullest assurance, therefore, that I may obtain from your kindness the testimony at least, that if by changing my office I have vacated my seat, and if vacating my seat I have yielded to the invitation from Liverpool, neither of these moves has been at all of my seeking, and that in fact (as the correspondence which you have seen must have proved to you), I persisted in my resistance to the one and the other, till it was too clear to me that it could not be finally persevered in, without an estrangement from political associates and private friends, with whom I have passed the best years of a long life, and without incurring in their judgment, and in that of others, the imputation of an indifference to public duty. To the pressure of these considerations alone could I be induced to yield. I have done so after struggling, I may truly say, to the twelfth hour; and I only trust that the grounds of my decision in this long and doubtful conflict, when weighed dispassionately, will not be censured by those who have long honoured me not more by their political attachment than by their private friendship.

"I remain, &c.

"W. HUSKISSON."

“ At a numerous Meeting of the Friends of the Right Hon. William Huskisson, held at the Assembly room Chichester, on Monday, the 24th ult., the following Address was unanimously agreed to :—

“ Chichester, Feb. 24, 1823.

“ Sir ;

“ We beg leave to offer to you our sincere congratulations, on your appointment to the high offices which his Majesty has been pleased to confer on you ; an appointment which you are so well qualified to fill, and which, we doubt not, will be attended with the most beneficial results to the country.

“ Our congratulations are, however, clouded by the reflection, that we have been deprived of the opportunity of proving that our disposition towards you remains unchanged ; and we cannot allow you to take leave of us, without expressing the deep regret with which we contemplate our political separation.

“ During the ten years you have represented us in Parliament, we have found strong and increasing reasons to justify our first choice—a choice which was dictated chiefly by a knowledge of your public character. You came amongst us almost a stranger. In losing you, we feel that we are parting from a friend, who has endeared himself to us by an unwearied attention to our local concerns, by multiplied acts of kindness towards many individually, and by the most conciliating demeanour towards all.

“ Perfectly convinced, as we are, that in relinquishing your seat for Chichester, you have yielded reluctantly to the call of public duty, and to imperative circumstances which you could not control ; we must still deplore the necessity which has deprived us of so valuable and enlightened a representative.

“ At every succeeding election which occurred during

our connection, you felt yourself strengthened in the confidence and affections of your Constituents; and we flattered ourselves, that it would have been long ere we should be called upon to select your successor.

“ Unforeseen events have, however, unfortunately precipitated that period. Yet jealous as we must be of the transfer of your services to the town of Liverpool, it is a flattering consideration that to you, in preference to all other public men, that immense emporium of national wealth should confide its important interests; and we cannot but reflect with proud satisfaction, that we also knew how to discover, and justly appreciate, your high value.

“ We most cordially join in the hope, that as neighbours and friends, our private intercourse will continue uninterrupted. On our part, we shall always feel the deepest interest in your welfare, and amidst the arduous duties of your present situation, our warmest wishes for your health and happiness will ever attend you.

“ The Right Hon. W. Huskisson, &c. &c.”

“ The above Address having been signed by a great majority of the Electors, was transmitted to Mr. Huskisson by the Chairman, William Leever, Esq., to whom the following Answer has been returned:—

“ Whitehall Place, March, 3, 1823.

“ Sir;

“ At the same time that I acknowledge the very flattering Address, so numerous and respectably signed by those whom it was lately my pride to consider as my Friends, and to represent in Parliament as my Constituents, at Chichester, I want words to convey to you, as their Chairman, and through you to them, the sense which I entertain of the honour which they have now conferred upon

me, and still more of their kindness and liberality, under all the circumstances which led me, reluctantly, to withdraw myself from their service.

“ If, indeed, our political connexion had terminated some years hence, in the only manner in which I had long and vain hoped it would ever be brought to a close—by the close of my political life—I might have felt regret and disappointment, if my retirement had been unaccompanied with the solacing assurance, that I had not outlived the affectionate regard, or forfeited the good opinion, of my Constituents, either by the neglect of their local concerns, or by my public conduct in Parliament. But when, yielding to what I considered a call of public duty, I returned to my friends at Chichester the trust which they had confided to me, I did so, under the painful apprehension, that the motives of my conduct might possibly be misconceived, and that I was exposing myself to the risk of giving offence in quarters, where I was, and still am, most anxious to retain and cultivate feelings of esteem and good-will.

“ The Address before me, not only relieves my mind from this apprehension, but conveys to me the warmest assurances of indulgent approbation and unabated friendship, in terms, too, so cordial as must awake in me, if possible, fresh feelings of gratitude towards the inhabitants of Chichester, as they have again awakened those painful feelings, with which I had so recently to contend, when I had to contemplate our political separation.

“ I must trust to your good offices to make known these sentiments to all whom partiality to me has induced to sign this Address, and to convey to them, at the same time, my most sincere thanks, for their congratulations on the recent marks of confidence which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to bestow upon me. I receive these congratulations, as well as their kind wishes for the continuance of my

health, as further proofs of the affectionate interest which my friends at Chichester take in my concerns, and have only once more to assure them that I shall, at all times, feel a corresponding interest in everything which can conduce to their happiness and welfare.

“ You must allow me to add my warmest acknowledgements of your great personal kindness to me on this occasion.

“ I remain, Sir, &c. &c.,

“ WILLIAM HUSKISSON.”

“ Wm. Leeves, Esq., Chairman, &c.”

On his visit to Eartham, during the Easter recess, the opportunity was taken of conferring upon him still further proofs of their attachment. The freedom of the City was unanimously voted to him, and, after a public dinner, a copy of the Warwick vase, in silver gilt, was presented to him, bearing the following Inscription :

To the Right Honourable
WILLIAM HUSKISSON,
President of the Board of Trade, Treasurer of His Majesty's Navy,
&c. &c. &c.
From the
ELECTORS OF CHICHESTER,
In testimony of
Their sincere respect for his public character,
Their grateful acknowledgment
Of his impartial attention to their local interests,
And their unfeigned regret
On his retirement from the
Representation of this City
In Parliament
April, MDCCCXXIII.

So general was the sense entertained of his ser-

vices at Chichester, that one of the principal, and most respectable, of the inhabitants, who had declined to sign the Address from a hesitation with respect to some slight particulars, immediately hastened to assure him by letter, how readily he acknowledged the benefits which his situation had enabled, and his disposition prompted him to confer on many who, without him, must have wanted all human aid, and to thank him for his liberal assistance and ready co-operation in institutions for the poorer classes. "At a future hour," he added, "very distant may that hour be! the recollection of the private and public good you have thus done will be a source of satisfaction and joy, in comparison with which all the well-merited honours and distinctions you have received as a statesman and legislator will be as nothing." To this very gratifying compliment, Mr. Huskisson returned the following answer :

" Whitehall Place, 2d March, 1823.

" My dear Sir;

" It is impossible for me not to avail myself of the first leisure moment which I have been able to command, since the receipt of your letter of the 27th ult., to thank you, as I now do most sincerely, for the frankness, as well as for the kindness, with which you have expressed yourself towards me in that letter.

" I am particularly anxious to make to you this acknowledgment of my feelings, before I receive the address to which your letter refers.

“ In a country where, happily now, knowledge is so extensively diffused, it is natural that men, with equally good intentions, should entertain honest differences of opinion upon the difficult and complicated questions which arise in civil society ; and perhaps equally natural that, among the most cultivated minds, those whose happier lot it is to take only a speculative and abstract view of public affairs, should not always concur in the proceedings of those who have to deal with them practically, under all the intricacies, in which the management of human concerns, even of less magnitude, is too often involved.

“ It is, however, a consolation to a public man, when justice is done to his motives ; and I own that it is to me a subject of just pride and gratification that, whatever may be the political opinions and inclinations of a part of the respectable community, one of whose representatives I have been for the last ten years, I have yet to learn, that any one individual has to complain of my not having discharged impartially towards all, the duties of my trust, as far as related to their local and peculiar interests.

“ Now that the public relation in which I stood to the city of Chichester is terminated, I trust that I shall not be found wanting in those private duties, which, according to his station and ability, every man owes to his less fortunate neighbour, and the reward of which, in every man’s own feelings, must be of a higher nature than any which the approbation of others can bestow, much as the testimony of that approbation is to be valued, especially when coming from an individual like yourself, towards whom I shall ever entertain the sincere esteem and regard with which I now remain,

“ My dear Sir, yours, very sincerely,

“ W. HUSKISSON.”

Should these pages ever meet the eye of the venerable philanthropist to whom this letter was

addressed, who in his retirement still pursues the career of charity which has made his life a blessing to the unfortunate, it is hoped, that he will pardon the use which has been made of his authority, to do honour to departed worth.

Though their political connexion was now dissolved, and the intercourse between them naturally became less frequent, the respect and attachment of his former constituents towards Mr. Huskisson did not diminish, and they continued to watch his career with unabated pride and admiration. When the melancholy accident occurred, which robbed the country of his valuable existence, the inhabitants of Chichester testified their sense of his loss by voluntarily closing the shops on the day of his funeral, and by the tolling of the bells of the different churches : while a sum of money was immediately subscribed in the town and neighbourhood, in order to raise a monument in the Cathedral Church, which should commemorate his public and private virtues.

+ As soon as it was understood that Mr. Huskisson had resolved to retire from Chichester, a requisition was forwarded to him from Liverpool, bearing upwards of a thousand signatures; to which he returned the following answer :

“ Whitehall-place, 3d Feb. 1823.

“ Gentlemen :

“ I lose no time in acknowledging the honour of your very flattering invitation to become a candidate for the representation of the town of Liverpool in Parliament.

“ I am fully sensible that, in selecting me from so many persons more worthy of your preference, you have looked to me rather as the friend of your late representative, than as possessing any merits of my own, which can entitle me to become his successor. The only other claim, indeed, which I can have to your support, is that of having, during a long political life, uniformly, however humbly, maintained those political principles, of which Mr. Canning has been the strenuous and eloquent defender;—principles which, as they first recommended him to your notice, are still, I am persuaded, in entire concurrence with your own.

“ More than once in the course of last year, as well as recently, it has been intimated to me, from Liverpool, that I should receive such an invitation as that with which I am now honoured, whenever Mr. Canning might retire. If, up to the present period, I have discouraged such intimations, I have done so from the hesitation which I feel to withdraw myself from that political connexion, to which, for the last ten years, I have been indebted for my seat in Parliament;—a connexion to which I was invited by the city of Chichester, at the same time when you first invited Mr. Canning to Liverpool, and which has been continued, ever since, in a manner the most gratifying to all my feelings. I am sure that when I add, that my friends in that city have, up to the present moment, given me fresh proofs of their partiality and attachment, I need not describe to the friends of Mr. Canning at Liverpool, the pain with which I am brought to the consideration of any proposal, even the most honourable, by the acceptance of which that connexion must be terminated.

“ At the same time, I feel that, in a public man, it becomes something like a public duty not to refuse himself to such an invitation as I have now received from you. If, upon consideration, it is your deliberate wish that interests

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so extensive as those by which your local prosperity is connected with that of the whole kingdom, should be committed to my care, as one of your Representatives, however I may dissent from your judgment, I hold myself bound not to shrink from a trust of so much public importance.

“ There is yet, however, one objection which I think myself bound to submit to your consideration. It has been suggested to me, that in the situation to which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint me,—that of President of the Committee of Privy Council for the Affairs of Trade,—I may have to deal with cases, in which a conflict may arise between the commercial interests of Liverpool, and those of other parts of his Majesty’s dominions. This objection is one, Gentlemen, which it behoves you to weigh before it be too late ; because, if I know my own mind at all, I feel assured, that the risk, on every such occasion, would be that which *your* interests might perhaps incur, from an over anxiety to guard myself against, even the suspicion of, any improper bias in your favour.

“ If, therefore, you think this suggestion entitled to any weight, I entreat you to reconsider your invitation, and to transfer it to some one, with better claims to your confidence, to whom the objection cannot apply.

“ I have the honour to be, with the highest respect and acknowledgment,

“ Gentlemen,

“ Your very obliged and faithful servant,

“ W. HUSKISSON.”

The election commenced on the 14th of February, and finished on the following day, after a mock contest, in which Lord Molyneux, who declined appearing, polled twenty-three votes, and Dr. Crompton not one.

Mr. Huskisson had now reached an elevation whence he could beneficially exert, and call into activity, his unrivalled knowledge of commercial policy. Lord Bacon says, and the new President of the Board of Trade seemed to coincide in the justice of the maxim, that “merchants are *vena porta*, and if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and flourish little: taxes and imposts upon them do seldom good to the King’s revenue, for that which he wins in the hundred, he loseth in the shire; the particular rates being increased, but the total bulk of trading rather decreased.”*

Some preliminary steps had been already taken by Mr. Robinson and Mr. Wallace, for relaxing the restrictions which had formerly clogged our trade, and several new laws affecting it had been proposed by the Government in the session of 1822. On Mr. Huskisson’s appointment, he immediately proceeded, firmly but cautiously, to take steps towards further and more important alterations. In these he found himself opposed and thwarted by the prejudices of an active and powerful party, who viewed all innovations with a jealous and unfriendly eye; and the fate of the first Bill for regulating the Silk Manufacture was an evident proof of the obstacles which he would have to encounter, before his measures could be crowned with success. This Bill, after it had passed the lower House, was returned from the Lords so

* Lord Bacon’s Essay on Empire.

changed and mutilated, that Mr. Huskisson preferred abandoning it for the session, rather than to adopt the amendments. In the following year, he was more successful, and the Bill passed into a law without encountering any very formidable opposition.

The impediments which presented themselves at every step, towards a more liberal policy, are strikingly described in the following article extracted from a public Journal; which though there applied to a later period of his career, is equally true at the moment of which we are treating:—

“The clamour raised against Mr. Huskisson, by the Agriculturists on the one hand, and the Manufacturers on the other, affords a lesson from which future Ministers will not fail to profit. It will be taken for granted, that it is the wisest course for men in office, in all cases, to stick to whatever is established,—“*stare super antiquas vias*,”—to consent to a change only when it is loudly demanded by the great majority in Parliament, but never to recommend any innovation which is not so demanded: this is the system on which all former Ministers of this country have acted, and it is obvious that all Ministers, who wish to consult their own ease and advantage, cannot do better than follow it. The liberal part of the present Administration have erred in thinking too favourably of human nature,—in thinking, that in departing from the old practice, and endeavouring to introduce substantial ameliorations into the Commercial System of the country, they would receive such support from the People, as the honesty of their intentions fairly entitled them to. We believe, in our conscience, that Mr. Huskisson approaches nearer to the character of a virtuous minister—a minister to whom

the welfare of the whole nation is more at heart than his own advantage,—than any man who has ever been in office in this country ; but we question very much, whether, in the difficulties in which he has involved himself, he will be adequately supported against the attacks of his selfish enemies. Our approbation of ourselves is generally fervent enough ; but our approbation of others is seldom so immoderate as to hurry us into any indiscretion in their support. We fear Mr. Huskisson is doomed to experience, to his cost, the difference, in point of zeal, between his disinterested admirers, and those who conceive their interests likely to be, in any way, affected by his measures.

“ The head of a faction receives from the members the tribute of a clamorous admiration, because interest is the bond of union, and such admiration is supposed to be conducive to the ends in view. But the man who endeavours to distinguish himself by promoting the good of a whole nation, necessarily provokes the hostility of many, whose interests suffer from his measures, while he makes few warm partizans.

“ It will give us sincere pleasure to find that we have taken too gloomy a view of human nature, and that, if the difficulty of Mr. Huskisson’s position be great, he will find corresponding support from the friends of sound principles.”*

In spite of this demonstration of hostility to the measures of the liberal portion of the Administration, as evinced in the fate of the Silk Bill, some important commercial alterations were effected in the course of 1823. Mr. Wallace’s Warehousing Bill was passed, and two resolutions agreed to, which enabled the King in Council to place the Shipping of a foreign state on the same footing

* Morning Chronicle.

with that of Great Britain, provided similar advantages were experienced by British shipping in the ports of such foreign states; and also to impose countervailing duties, in case such were rendered necessary by the conduct of other countries; and an act founded upon these resolutions,—usually called the Reciprocity of Duties Act,—was carried through both Houses.

In the course of this session Mr. Huskisson introduced other measures, connected with the trade and manufactures of the country—the Merchant Vessels Apprenticeship Bill, and that for removing the various vexatious regulations with which the manufacture of Scotch Linen had hitherto been shackled, and its prosperity impeded.

He also brought forward the Registry Bill, which had been prepared in the preceding year, but which he had found still lying at the Board of Trade when he succeeded to that office. This Bill was a consolidation of all the existing laws on the subject, with many improvements, and had been much called for by every one connected with the Shipping Interests of the country. It was a subject very complicated in its details, and difficult to understand; but Mr. Huskisson felt its importance, and lost no time in making himself master of, and bringing it before Parliament; and, after some protracted delays in the House of Lords, which drew from him a firm but temperate remonstrance, these Bills ultimately passed before the close of the session.

It would be tedious, in a narrative like this, to endeavour to follow Mr. Huskisson through all the different measures which he introduced and carried, while he directed the commercial department of the Government, or to discuss the treaties which were, during that time, negotiated with Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, the Hans Towns, several of the new States of America, and finally with France. It has already been stated, that such discussion would not be entered into, nor the demon of controversy evoked by a studied vindication, or eulogium, of the principles of **FREE TRADE**.* The best history of this brilliant period of his public life,—the best exposition of that system,—will be found in those Speeches, with which he introduced, and defended his various measures, and which will be allowed, even by those who differed from him on some points, to comprise a mass of the most profound and valuable information on the subjects to which they refer, and be considered by those who formerly assisted his labours, and now uphold his principles, as forming a Manual for future Ministers, on all questions of commercial and international policy.

In 1824, several further measures of relaxation

* Reluctant as we are to engage in a controversy on the merits of Mr. Huskisson's Commercial System, we cannot forbear calling the attention of the advocates for prohibition and protection to an article in the Foreign Quarterly Review of October 1830, and begging them to contrast the effects of the Prohibitive System, as manifested in the present state of the manufacturing interest in France, with the official reports which have been published in Prussia of the results of an opposite policy.

and amelioration were accomplished, and the Silk Bill resumed and carried into operation.

In 1825, another most important undertaking was completed,—the general revision of the Revenue Laws. This was a task* of vast magnitude and extraordinary labour, and one which, as Mr. Huskisson frequently declared, could never have been achieved, but for the able assistance and unwearied diligence of Mr. James Deacon Hume, then of the Customs, and now of the Board of Trade,—to whom the lasting gratitude of the country is owing, for his persevering exertions, and for the essential benefit which he thus conferred on the Commercial world.

It was on the occasion of the two Speeches on the Colonial and Foreign Commerce of the country, in which this revision was announced, that Mr. Huskisson was gratified with the following high authority, in approbation of the course he was pursuing.

“ Charles-street, 27th April, 1825.

“ Dear Sir :

“ On my return to town yesterday, I found on my table your two printed Speeches, for which I sincerely thank

* Some idea may be formed of the laborious nature of this undertaking, when it is stated, that these laws had accumulated, from the reign of Edward I. up to the present time, to the enormous number of *fifteen hundred*. From the contradictions and confusion attendant on such a chaos of legislation, merchants were perplexed and harassed beyond measure. It was now, under the auspices of the Board of Trade and the Treasury, compressed by Mr. Hume into *eleven* Acts, in so clear and comprehensive a manner, that the meaning or application of them can no longer be mistaken.

you. How cordially I concur in all that those measures effect I know I need not tell you; and if they still leave undone much that I confidently believe would be even yet more beneficial than what you now do, I have in the course of a pretty long public life gained experience enough to learn, that even those things which are most clearly and undeniably useful, require to have the way smoothed before them, especially when so many interests are to be conciliated, and so many prejudices to be surmounted. And it is fair to add, that you have already accomplished more in this line, than I had the least expectation that I should live to see.

"Go on and prosper! is therefore my earnest exhortation, and ardent wish.

"Believe me ever, &c. &c.

"GREENVILLE."

"I ought not to have omitted, how much I feel gratified by the obliging expressions you have used personally towards myself.

"G."*

Yet, notwithstanding the strong prejudices which were known to be arrayed against them, these and other considerable changes in the Commercial system made their way through both Houses of Legislature in this session, without encountering any alarming resistance, and without calling forth any denunciations of the terrible effects which, in the following year, it was attempted to impute to their operation.

In this year, Mr. Huskisson spoke, for the first time at any length, in favour of the Catholic Relief

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* The high value which justly attaches to proofs of approbation such as this, will, it is hoped, be accepted as an apology for the use of private correspondence in this, and a few similar instances.

Bill. Could he then have anticipated the fate of that question a few years later, how well and pointedly might he have remarked, as he had done in reference to the Commercial concessions which had been, at different intervals, granted to Ireland, that if Parliament rejected the Bill before them, the time would come when "state necessity, acting under a sense of political danger, must yield, without grace, that which good sense and good feeling had before recommended in vain." It is surely impossible for language to pourtray more faithfully the ultimate settlement of the Catholic question.

It was in June in this year that, on the third reading of the Bill on the Law of Principal and Factor—(a measure for defining and amending which had been carried by him through the House of Commons, in the preceding year, but had failed in the Lords)—Mr. Huskisson particularly distinguished himself in a speech, of which, unfortunately, not even an outline exists. The House had been occupied all night with the case of Mr. Kenrick and Canfor the butcher, and the debate on the Law of Merchant and Factor bill did not come on till very late. Mr. Scarlett made a long and learned speech against the measure. His arguments were combated by Mr. Huskisson, who in a speech of an hour and a half gave his entire view of the commercial polity of this country, as the natural depôt of the merchandize passing between the new and the old world, and urged the necessity of affording

all possible security to advances on goods warehoused, in order to make it so. There are many and great authorities now living who pronounced that he did this in a way in which nobody else could have given it. Owing to the lateness of the hour at which he rose, this elaborate speech was dispatched by the reporters in a few lines; while an admirable one delivered by Mr. Baring, on the same subject, was left wholly unreported.

In the progress of the spring, Mr. Huskisson, as well as Lord Liverpool, had more than once pointed out the dangers attending the phrenzy of speculation which raged like an epidemic, and endeavoured to open the eyes of the Public to the folly and iniquity of their proceedings. "Such speculation," he warned them, "was the offspring of unnatural excitement, and in the body mercantile, as well as the body physical, such excitement was generally followed by depression and exhaustion." He implored the country banks not to lend their money to the encouragement of crude and hasty speculations, and urged the spirit, then so prevalent, as a reason for not wishing at that moment to let loose the Corn Laws. But, whilst he warned the public, that "their high raised hopes would in the end vanish into thin air, and leave those who entertained them nothing but regret and disappointment," he admitted that he did not see how Parliament could interfere. The convulsion which shook the country at the close of 1825, and which is still remembered by the de-

nomination of "The Panic," proved how wise, as well as how unavailing, were these wholesome admonitions.

With that injustice with which the world so often shifts the blame of evils resulting from its own folly upon other causes, those, whose obstinate imprudence had involved them in ruin, now joined the cry which was raised by the party which had perseveringly manifested their hostility to the recent changes in our Commercial System, and imputed to those changes the late deplorable disasters. This charge, however clamorously advanced, may be safely asserted to have utterly failed, whenever it was tried by the test of reason and truth, and Mr. Huskisson himself repelled it with the following flat contradiction, in one of the debates which arose on the subject: "On the one hand," he said, "there is the complaint, that too much has been done for free trade; while on the other, there is an equally loud complaint, that nothing has been done. I shall not now stay to discriminate between such conflicting extremes of opinion. I cannot, however, but wonder, that while gentlemen within this House assert, that the principles of Free Trade have not been carried far enough, there should be others out of this House persevering in their attempts to direct the opposition of the misinformed towards those measures, which, I am bold to declare, have in no degree contributed to the distresses lately experienced in this country."

In the various projects which disgraced that period, and which were attended with such fatal consequences, Mr. Huskisson had no participation. He afterwards declared, in his place in Parliament, that "neither directly nor indirectly, had he had the least share or interest in any Company, which had been formed in the years 1824, 1825, or 1826:—he had, indeed, an interest in one of the oldest Insurance Companies in the country; but it had remained of the same amount for the last twenty years." Nor was there the slightest reservation in the nature, or extent, of this declaration. Those who possess the best means of information can assert, how scrupulously and rigidly he exacted the same forbearance from all about him.

Besides the other weighty and laborious questions which occupied Mr. Huskisson, both in his official and parliamentary character, in 1825 and 1826, must be enumerated the complicated and delicate discussions with Mr. Rush, afterwards continued with Mr. Gallatin, on the various points in dispute between Great Britain and the United States of America, comprising the adjustment of the North-western Boundary, and that of the province of New Brunswick,—the navigation of the river St. Lawrence,—the more effectual suppression of the African Slave Trade,—and the intercourse with the West-India Colonies. In the negotiations with the American Ministers, Mr. Huskisson was

at first assisted by Mr. Stratford Canning, and subsequently by Mr. Addington. The Protocols of the Conferences were by them drawn up, and then submitted to Mr. Canning, for his final revision and sanction. The State Papers and Correspondence of the British Ministers on this occasion may be cited as models, for purity of style, clearness of argument, and soundness of views; whilst the moderation with which the negotiation was conducted, and the absence of all bitterness or sarcasm in the communications interchanged, were hailed as an indication, that a more generous and conciliatory feeling was growing up between the two countries. Notwithstanding the friendly tone, however, in which the conferences were carried on, it was found impossible to make any impression on the American Government, or to obtain a repeal, or relaxation of the restrictions imposed by the Act of Congress of 1823. It became necessary, therefore, however reluctantly, to take steps for retaliation, and a British Order in Council was issued in July 1826, by which our Colonial harbours in the West-Indies were shut against all American vessels. After a long delay on the part of the American Government, they have recently abandoned their unreasonable pretensions. The intercourse between the United States and our West-India Colonies has consequently been again opened to American vessels, and experience has fully proved how wise was the policy, which di-

rected the firm, but temperate behaviour of the British Cabinet in this delicate conjuncture.*

In the autumn of 1825, Mr. Huskisson paid a short visit to his friend Lord Granville at Paris.

* The following Dialogue, in his own hand-writing, and bearing various marks of correction in the same, has been found among Mr. Huskisson's MS. Papers, and as there is every reason to believe it to have been his composition, it is inserted in this Note, as a specimen of that easy playfulness, which has been mentioned as one of the charms of his private society.

Fraternal Dialogue between John Bull and his brother Jonathan.

(date, July 1825.)

JONATHAN. "You are a very good and constant customer, John, at my shop, for flour, hoops, staves, and many other articles of my trade; you are good pay, and I am always glad to deal with you.

JOHN. "I believe all you say—I wish to continue a good customer; but I must say your mode of dealing with me is rather hard. Every time I travel to, or send to your shop (Sunday or not), I am obliged to pay double toll at the Turnpike-gate, which is close before it.

JONATHAN. "You need not take that trouble. I prefer sending my goods to my customers by my own porters, and as they are always ready and punctual in delivering the packages, I do not see why you should complain.

JOHN. "I complain because my own cart and horses have nothing to do, and my people are upon the poor rate, whilst I am paying you for portorage. I will not go on in this way.

JONATHAN. "Well! we will consider of it next Christmas, when the partners in our firm meet to talk over the concern."

John remains patient for another year, when, finding the Sunday Toll still continued, he asks what brother Jonathan and his firm have decided. (July 1826.)

JONATHAN. "We have resolved to grant a new lease of the tolls, without making any alteration in the terms.

JOHN. "You have! then I withdraw my custom.

JONATHAN. "The devil you do! (*aside.*) We mistook him for a more patient ass than he proves to be. How shall we contrive to bring him back to our shop?"

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As the Hotel of the Embassy was under repair, Lord Granville had been forced to hire a temporary residence, and Mr. Huskisson found himself once again an inmate of the same Hotel de Monaco (according to the modern nomenclature *l'Hotel d'Eckmühl*), which he had quitted with the Marquis of Stafford in 1792. Under what different circumstances did he now revisit it ! Thirty-three years had elapsed, and in the changes which had convulsed the world during that period, he might be said to have borne no inconsiderable part. He had left Paris private secretary to the Ambassador ; he returned to it a leading minister of the Crown of Great Britain, with the proud satisfaction of being able to look back upon the space which had intervened, upon his own conduct, and upon the change which had taken place in his own situation, without encountering one recollection which could raise a single feeling of self-reproach.

Superior to the pressure of the times, and disdaining to attribute it to false causes, the Merchants of Liverpool, with that spirit of liberality which so nobly characterizes them, came forward to testify their sense of the advantages which had been derived from the alterations already carried into effect, and to mark their approbation of those yet in progress ; and, early in 1826, Mr. Huskisson received the following Letter, which is too honourable to him in his public capacity, and to those from whom it proceeded, not to demand in-

sertion here. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the Service of Plate to which it alludes was worthy of the greatness of Liverpool, both in taste and magnificence.

“ Liverpool, 4th February, 1826.

“ My dear Sir,

“ As Chairman of the Committee, I have now the honour to request your acceptance of the Service of Plate presented to you by this great commercial town. The motives which led to this proof of public feeling are set forth in the following Inscription, and are also engraved on the centre ornament of the Service ; *viz.*

The Service of Plate
of which this Candelabrum is a part,
was presented to
The Right Hon. WILLIAM HUSKISSON,
by a numerous Body
of the Merchants, Freemen, and Inhabitants of
Liverpool ;
As a Testimony
of their sense of the Benefits
derived to the Nation at large
from the enlightened system
of Commercial Policy
brought forward by him
as President of the Board of Trade :
and of their Gratitude
for the zeal and ability with which,
as Member for Liverpool,
He has watched over the Interests of
His Constitnents.
1825.

“ Notwithstanding the embarrassment and distress which generally prevail in trade and manufactures, I am desired by the Committee to assure you, that their conviction of

the wisdom of the measures introduced by you, for the removal of Commercial Restrictions, remains undiminished, and that they confidently anticipate, from their matured operation, the most beneficial effects to the country at large.

“ It is very gratifying to me to have been selected by my liberal fellow-townsmen, as their organ on this occasion; and I have only to add, that

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“ JOHN BOLTON.”

To this Mr. Huskisson replied :

“ Somerset Place, February 6th, 1826.

“ My dear Sir,

“ I have this day had the honour to receive from a deputation of the Committee of the Merchants and Inhabitants of Liverpool, the Letter, with which you, as their Chairman, have been desired to accompany the presentation to me of the Service of Plate, prepared under the direction of that Committee, in compliance with the resolutions of the subscribers.

“ I receive with just pride, and acknowledge with the most lively gratitude, this mark of their approbation.

“ However splendid this munificent testimony of their sentiments, the record of those sentiments, in the Inscription upon the Plate, will ever be considered by me as constituting its highest value.

“ In this free country, it is the best recompense of the services of any man, filling a high and responsible situation (be his station in life otherwise what it may) to find himself supported by the cordial concurrence of those who, by their intelligence, as well as by the habits of their lives, are most competent to form a correct judgment, and whose welfare is most immediately concerned in the result of any important

measures, which it may be his duty to bring forward in Parliament.

“Valuable as the expression of such concurrence and support must be at any time, it is doubly grateful to me, under the present circumstances; and I hope I may be allowed to add (without risking the imputation of vanity), that the renewed declaration, by the merchants and inhabitants of Liverpool, of their matured and confirmed opinion, is not, under these circumstances, altogether useless to the public interest. Partial as their kindness to myself might render that opinion in easier times, it will hardly be imagined that in times of difficulty like the present, they would allow a disposition to employ the language of compliment to overbear their sound and sincere conviction.

“To such vicissitudes as those which have recently occurred, the commerce of this country has been at all times liable. They are, perhaps, the inevitable result of activity and enterprise, stimulated by unbounded credit; and by those perpetually increasing powers of machinery, which ingenuity has created in aid of the natural industry of our population.

“But, by whatever causes the present stagnation may have been occasioned, and however deeply I lament its pressure (more especially that portion of it which falls upon my constituents), I am fully convinced that it has in no degree been produced, or aggravated, by the relaxing of any of those restrictions which Parliament deemed it no longer expedient to retain.

“In this conviction I am supported, not exclusively by those who generally approve the measures of the administration, but by others of the greatest talents and authority, who look to those measures with a less friendly eye. By this coincidence of opinion, our present commercial system is (fortunately, as I conceive) withdrawn from the range of those questions which divide the two great political parties

of the State, upon other points of general policy ; and I cannot but hope, that when confidence shall be again restored (as I trust it soon will be) in pecuniary transactions, the like general sense will prevail, among persons practically engaged in commerce, of the increased facilities, and encouragement, which the late changes are calculated to afford to the manufacturing industry and wholesome trade of the country.

“ I cannot conclude without offering to you, my dear Sir, my warmest thanks, not only for the flattering terms in which you have expressed yourself personally towards me on this occasion, but for the unwearied kindness and active assistance which I have experienced from you during the whole course of my connexion with Liverpool.

“ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“ W. HUSKISSON.”

Parliament met on the 2d of February 1826, and the recent embarrassments and distress became the subject of immediate debate. In the various discussions which ensued on the Bank Charter and Promissory Notes Acts, Mr. Huskisson, as might be expected, took a prominent part ; and in answer to the abuse which was now scattered with no unsparing hand against the measures, of which he was considered the great champion and adviser, referred for the solution of the present calamitous state of domestic affairs, to the ineffectual warnings which he had given in the preceding year ; while he challenged the most searching inquiry into the share which it was asserted the changes in our restrictive system had

had in producing the convulsion which terminated in the ruin of so many.

It was not long before he had an opportunity of defending himself on one of his own measures. On the 24th of February, the Silk Question was selected as the object of attack, and Mr. Ellice moved for a Committee to consider of the Petition from persons connected with that trade. For the issue of this night's debate, we must refer to the Speeches themselves; but as we have already, in an early part of this Memoir, alluded to the kind and flattering notice which Mr. Huskisson's exhibition on this occasion elicited from the Marquis of Stafford, we cannot here deny ourselves the gratification of adding to that authority a short expression of Mr. Canning's feelings on the same subject.

" F. O., 24th February, 1826, 2. A.M.

" My dear Mrs. Huskisson :

" Having written to the King, I cannot reconcile it to my sense of duty to go to bed without writing to you, to congratulate you on Huskisson's exhibition of to-night. I do assure you, without the smallest compliment or exaggeration, that he has made one of the very best speeches that I ever heard in the House of Commons: a speech decisive for ever of his character and reputation, both as a statesman and an orator. It was of the *very first rate*—and as such I wish you joy of it with all my heart.

" Most sincerely yours,

" GEORGE CANNING."

The advocates of the new System never enjoyed a more glorious triumph than on this night. Never was there a more powerful, or more unanswerable defence of that system, than may be found in the reply made by Mr. Huskisson to the speeches of Mr. Ellice and Mr. Williams!—Never was a more generous, or more statesman-like support afforded to a colleague, than the magnificent display of eloquence, with which Mr. Canning eulogized his friend and overwhelmed his persecutors! His speech should never be separated from Mr. Huskisson's on the same occasion. It is the brightest record of that friendship which subsisted for the happiness of both, and for the welfare of the country, between those two noble and congenial spirits.

It is so pleasing to consider Mr. Huskisson, when speaking in his own person, that we are tempted again to have recourse to private correspondence, to mark at once the estimation in which he was held by the greatest practical authorities, and the modesty with which he received the praise bestowed upon him.

His friend Mr. Gladstone had transmitted to him the following extract of a letter addressed to himself by Mr. Kirkman Finlay, dated

“ 23d March, 1826.

* * * “ I had indeed the pleasure and the advantage of a long, and to me most interesting, conversation with Mr. Huskisson.

"I do not think that history tells us of any minister in any state, who ever brought into operation so fine a system of Mercantile policy. The knowledge of theory and practice were never possessed by any one in so high a degree; and he not only at once sees ultimate benefit, but the time and the manner in which that benefit may be acquired, without material injury to existing interests. His life is a most valuable one; and I sincerely hope it may be long preserved as a blessing to the country."

Mr. Huskisson's answer was in these words:

"Somerset Place, 25th March, 1826.

"My dear Sir:

"If I deserve any portion of Finlay's praise as a minister, it is only that in which he gives me the credit of uniting some practical knowledge to theory: and if I have that knowledge in any degree, it is because I am always desirous and disposed to listen to him, and such as he, upon subjects which they understand so much better than myself.

"I had ample proof of this in the conversation to which Finlay alludes. However, it is a great comfort and satisfaction to me, to find myself supported against the clamour of some, and the prejudices of others, by all that are most intelligent in that very class of the community who have the best means of forming a sound judgment on the measures which I have submitted to Parliament.

"Ever yours, &c.

"W. HUSKISSON."

"J. Gladstone, Esq."

The disadvantages of the existing Corn Laws had become so apparent, and a fresh revision of them had been so strongly pressed upon Government in the last session of Parliament, that Mr.

Huskisson had been induced to give an implied promise to bring the whole subject under the consideration of the House, in the course of the session of 1826. At the time when this engagement was supposed to have been incurred, it was understood that a dissolution would take place in the course of the following autumn. Contrary to expectation, this dissolution did not take place, and Mr. Huskisson naturally relinquished his intention. Indeed, Ministers announced, on the very first day of the session, their determination not to propose any change in the existing Laws during the present year; as they were unwilling to bring forward so important a subject in the then agitated condition of the country, and were still more indisposed to submit a question of such extreme intricacy and delicacy to be discussed by an expiring Parliament, where it was impossible to hope it could be examined with that calm and unprejudiced consideration, which it so peculiarly claimed. The subject being thus declined by Government, was introduced by Mr. Whitmore, in a formal motion, "for a Committee to inquire into the State of the Corn Laws," and several times afterwards became matter of discussion. On all these occasions, though advocating the necessity of delay, Mr. Huskisson did not disguise his opinion, that the System hitherto pursued was an erroneous one,—that the change which, during ten years of peace, had been operating, both internally and externally, required

a corresponding change in our legislation on this subject;—or his hopes, that he might see a free trade in Corn established, under proper and due protection. The business was ultimately postponed to the following year, with a full understanding, that Ministers should then be prepared to bring forward a new-modelling of these Laws, on their own responsibility.

Our Parliamentary history presents no parallel, in the effect produced by what, for the sake of brevity, we will again call his Professional Speeches, to that which Mr. Huskisson was accustomed to excite, whenever he brought forward, or vindicated, his great plans of Commercial Reform. He may be said, indeed, to have formed a new æra in Parliamentary speaking, and to have raised his department to a consequence before unknown. Subjects which, from whatever cause, had hitherto failed in attracting that general attention, which their importance might have justly demanded, were now listened to with the deepest interest; and his Speeches,—minute and unadorned as they were—on the unpromising topics of Silk and Shipping, raised an admiration and interest equal to those which attended the most eloquent expositions of his colleagues on Foreign policy, or the Financial statements which, year after year, announced to the public successive reductions of taxation. Nor was the effect produced by these speeches confined to this country

alone. They were translated into French at Paris ; and he received from France, Germany, and the United States of America, frequent congratulations on his convincing justification of the new system, and warm encouragement to pursue a course, which, in its consequences, tended to the general advantage, not only of his countrymen, but of the whole civilized world.

The Parliament was dissolved in June 1826, and Mr. Huskisson was re-elected for Liverpool, after a miserable effort to raise an opposition, under the pretext, that the liberal policy of the Government, in respect to the relaxation of the Commercial System, had injured the native manufactures and trade of the country. No candidate could, however, be found, and the attempt fell to the ground.

As the autumn approached, the inconvenience attending the actual state of the Corn Laws became strongly apparent, and the complaints of the manufacturing classes grew louder and more frequent. The oat harvest had failed very generally, and the price had risen to that of famine. Under this pressure, the Government determined to take upon itself the responsibility of permitting the importation of oats, beans, and rye, and an Order in Council was accordingly issued for that purpose. But as this Order was in contravention of the existing laws, it became necessary to assemble the new Parliament, in order to enable Ministers to apply for an Act of Indemnity. The two Houses

accordingly met about the middle of November, and an Indemnity Bill was passed without opposition; Ministers, at the same time, giving a pledge that, after the Christmas recess, they would be prepared to bring forward a plan for a general revision of the Corn Laws. This plan had been matured and digested during the autumn by Lord Liverpool and Mr. Huskisson; who had spared no labour to procure authentic information on this difficult subject, or pains to frame such a Bill as might conciliate at once the conflicting interests both of the grower and consumer; and it had been decided in the Cabinet that, in order to stamp the measure with greater authority, it should be brought forward, in the one House by Lord Liverpool, and in the other by Mr. Canning, as the two leading Ministers.

The close attention with which Mr. Huskisson had applied himself to public business, during the last two years, and the deep anxiety which he naturally felt for the accomplishment and success of his new measures, had visibly shaken a constitution, already impaired by the excitement he had undergone in the winter of 1822. His spirits, too, had certainly suffered; for however philosophically he outwardly bore himself, against the calumnies with which he was assailed, those who saw, and watched him in his hours of retirement, could perceive, that the shaft had not been shot altogether in vain, and that his generous nature sometimes

sank* under the reiterated attacks of his malignant persecutors, who pursued him, as Mr. Canning expressed it, in one of the most feeling, as well as most beautiful, pieces of eloquence that ever fell from the lips of even that great master of the passions, “in the same doctrine and spirit, which embittered the life of Turgot, and consigned Galileo to the dungeons of the Inquisition.”

The year 1827—so fruitful in melancholy occurrences—was ushered in by the death of the Duke of York. Mr. Huskisson, who had before been slightly indisposed, suffered much from the severity of the cold during his attendance at the funeral, and he there laid the foundation of that complaint in the throat, from the effects of which he never wholly recovered. He returned to Earham on the 21st of January, and on the 24th, Mr. Canning arrived there from Bath, where he had been to visit Lord Liverpool, and to make arrangements for the approaching Session. His appearance bore evident signs of lurking malady, and the day after his arrival he had a sharp access of cold and fever; but finding himself better on the following morn-

* The following extract is taken from a MS. Book, found after his death, in a private box.

“Whatever pains I have taken for the improvement and simplification of the Laws which regulate our Commerce and Industry, I have taken it all for the sake of the public interest. So far from serving any interest of my own, I have gained the ill-will and enmity of many, partly secret, partly declared,—painful to myself, but not useless, perhaps, to the Country.”

ing, he proceeded to join his family at Brighton, and a few days afterwards Mr. Huskisson removed to London. On the day when Lord Liverpool was struck with apoplexy, Mr. Huskisson had been ordered not to leave the house, and the intelligence did not therefore reach him till about four o'clock in the afternoon. His anxiety to ascertain the particulars induced him to go immediately to Fife House, and this imprudence, and the excitement which ensued from the interruption of public business, produced, in a few days, a decided attack of inflammation on the trachea.

It has been supposed by many that, had the political life of Lord Liverpool not been thus suddenly terminated, it was the intention of that nobleman to have retired from his high office at the close of the present Session. His Lordship, it has been said, felt that the time was fast approaching, when the claims of the Catholics could no longer be resisted with prudence; and although he deemed it necessary for his own consistency, that the concession should not be made while he remained Chief Minister of the Crown, he had resolved, if not to give it his active support, at least to exert his powerful influence in mitigating the opposition which it had hitherto experienced in the House of Lords. With these feelings, his Lordship contemplated Mr. Canning as his natural successor, and would not only have given him his cordial assistance, but would, probably, when the Catholic Question had once been disposed of, have

resumed his seat in the Cabinet, in some office of a less laborious nature than his present one. Whether these conjectures were well-founded must now remain for ever uncertain ; but they are perfectly in consonance with the known patriotism of that virtuous minister. Could they have been realized, how vast might have been the difference in the events which have subsequently occurred !

Whatever may have been the authority for these surmises, or the probability of these speculations, certain it is, that never was there a more unfortunate or more perplexing state of things than now commenced. The nature of Lord Liverpool's illness was such as to preclude all hope of recovery. Mr. Canning, to whom, as the leading Minister in the House of Commons, the charge of introducing the Corn Bill had been delegated by his colleagues, had had a relapse, and was confined to his bed at Brighton ; and Mr. Huskisson was not permitted to quit his room in London. It was, nevertheless, extremely desirable, nay almost absolutely necessary, that he should communicate personally with Mr. Canning, before the Corn Bill was brought forward ; as, although the latter had undertaken to open the discussion, in order to stamp the measure more authoritatively with the sanction of Government, the subject was one as foreign to the natural bent of his genius, and to the usual duties of his department, as it was familiar to the pursuits and habits of the President of the Board of Trade. Mr. Huskisson's medical

advisers, however, peremptorily refused to allow him to leave London, and he was consequently necessitated to convey to Mr. Canning, through the medium of a confidential friend, those explanations of detail and calculation, which were so indispensable towards unfolding the scheme clearly and intelligibly in the House of Commons.

To increase the complicated embarrassments of the moment, the Catholic Question was again to be discussed, and Mr. Canning's anxiety to be present, and eagerness for the result, were known to be overwhelming. It came on in March, and the hopes of the Catholics were once more defeated. It was with considerable difficulty that Mr. Huskisson could be detained from this debate; but a sure anti-Catholic voter having been procured to pair off with him, he reluctantly submitted to the commands of the physician.

Whatever intrigues or paltry jealousies may have marked the interval which elapsed between Lord Liverpool's attack and the final permission given to Mr. Canning to reconstruct the Government, they are foreign to the subject of this memoir; and when the majority of his former colleagues abandoned the new Premier, it may be confidently asserted, that he found in the friendship, the abilities and the public character of the President of the Board of Trade, one of his most powerful supports, against the various difficulties which threatened to surround him.

By the beginning of April, Mr. Huskisson's health was sufficiently re-established to allow him to go to Lord Stafford's, at Wimbledon, for change of air; but he did not resume his place in the House of Commons till after the Easter recess. On the 7th of May, after several postponements, and a long and threatening note of preparation, General Gascoyne brought forward his motion, for a Committee to inquire into the distressed state of the Shipping Interest; when Mr. Huskisson, for the last time as President of the Board of Trade, undertook the vindication of the recent changes in the Commercial Policy of the country, and in a Speech characterized by the most statesman-like views and sentiments, and abounding in the most valuable commercial information, overthrew the allegations of his opponents, not only by the most convincing reasoning, but by the clearest arithmetical proofs. The long impunity which he had allowed to the traducers of his public character had given such increased vigour to their calumnies, that during the last year he had been assailed in the foulest and most dastardly language,—language calculated to point against him the blindest passions of the populace,—not only in a weekly journal called “The Watchman,” but in numberless anonymous letters and publications. To these he contented himself with making a short and spirited allusion; but, reluctant as he always was to detain the House with matters personal to him-

self, it was impossible to pass over in silence the wanton attack which had been made upon him, in the House of Lords, by the Earl of Lauderdale. The conclusion of this masterly Speech may safely be recommended to the diligent study of all who have a share in the Councils of the nation in these eventful times. Let them be assured, that there never was a sounder truth advanced, than that "this country cannot stand still whilst others are advancing in science, in industry, in everything which contributes to increase the power of empires, and to multiply the means of enjoyment and comfort to civilized man; this country cannot stand still, so long as there exists a free Press out of doors to collect and embody, and a free discussion in Parliament to guide and direct, the influence of public opinion." Let the opposers of Improvement lay this to their hearts, and be assured, that it is in vain they array their feeble powers against the irresistible march of improvement which now pervades the civilized world.

It is barely rendering justice to the Press to acknowledge, that throughout the progress of these changes in our Commercial Policy, Mr. Huskisson met with a steady disinterested support from some of the most esteemed of the daily Journals,—a support the more honourable to them, as they were politically opposed to the Administration of which he formed a part. It is from one of these

that we copy the following able remarks on this Speech :—

“ We look upon Mr. Huskisson to be the most useful minister that England has had to boast of for many years. It is not merely that he has reasoned upon experimental questions with more discrimination and acuteness than his neighbours, but that he has watched the relative play of the national interests upon each other, with more patient and steady vigilance; embracing gradually and leisurely within his view, a wider field of facts by which to qualify his principles, as well as to support them; and thus coming to the executive duties of a Statesman armed with that especial branch and order of knowledge, by which those who designate themselves as ‘practical politicians’ profess to require that the affairs of nations should be judged, and by which Mr. Huskisson has abundantly proved, that your men of ‘practice,’ when they abuse their opportunities, can best be exposed and silenced.

“ The right honourable gentleman has just published, after a careful revision, his recent Speech upon the state of the Shipping Interest. In that Speech, he has done more for the cause of common sense and rectitude in legislation, than we have often seen effected by more ponderous and presuming means. The great beauty of this discourse is its perfect simplicity. The documents referred to are so decisive—the demonstration offered is so clear and absolute—that the mind of the reader seems almost passive in its reception of the important and triumphant truth contended for by the Minister whose system of policy has been on trial. Instead of the decline of British Shipping, consequent, as was alleged, on the partial opening of the Navigation Laws, it comes out as plain as figures can make it, that, with the single exception of the Silk trade—which

appears to have been saved, instead of sacrificed, by the liberal regulations of the right honourable gentleman—the trade in ships has suffered less from the general revulsion of commerce since 1825, than any other department of national industry in this empire.

“ We shall not weaken the impression which a perusal of this pamphlet *must* infallibly produce upon the brain of any but a madman, by quoting particular sentences or tables, in testimony of the overthrow inflicted by Mr. Huskisson on the very ignorant, or very little scrupulous, complaints brought against him, on behalf of those whose sentiments the other member for Liverpool was delegated, on the above occasion, to make known. But this much it is only fair to mention. The year 1825, being one so distinguished, or disgraced, by wild and immeasurable speculation, that no candid man would think of taking the forced importations of that disastrous year as a standard of comparison for any that preceded or may follow it,—so is it obvious that, in relation to shipping no less than cotton, we must exclude the year 1825 from among the general bases of reasoning, with regard to commercial prosperity or decay. With that exception, then, it is manifest from the tables, that, in the year 1826, the British shipping inwards contained above 100,000 tons, and employed above 8,000 seamen more than 1824, while the shipping outwards not only exceeded every former year since 1814, but even that of 1825 itself, by upwards of 140,000 tons, and by more than 2,000 seamen. The Speech ought, indeed, to be made the manual of every body who wishes for proof in matters of legislation, or who desires a sample of the danger which might befall this country, were implicit credit to be given by Parliament to the assertions of interested men.”*

In May, Mr. Whitmore brought forward a motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the

* The “TIMES.”

East-India Trade. Mr. Huskisson maintained the propriety of postponing the Inquiry; and the statement which he made of his views on this important question proved so satisfactory to the House, that all parties joined in supporting his suggestion, and Mr. Whitmore not only consented to withdraw his motion, but expressed his readiness to leave the subject entirely in his hands. In the course of the same month, Mr. Huskisson took occasion, on the presentation of a Petition of the Wool-growers of Dorsetshire, to explain the policy which had guided the alterations made in the duties and regulations affecting the Wool Trade; and to exhibit the causes which had produced the immense increase in the growth of wool abroad, especially in Germany. He did not, unfortunately, live to hear how completely the soundness of his arguments and of his views, respecting this valuable branch of our manufactures, has been proved; for the following extract is from a letter dated the 27th of October 1830. It is taken from a communication made by a gentleman, who is supposed to possess the most extensive and accurate information on this topic, and who, as such, is often consulted by Government—

“South Down wool is now 14*d.* and 15*d.*; which, in 1828, in the Inquiry before the Lords, was admitted to be a remunerating price. The advance in this wool is owing to the improvements in machinery, by which it is now rendered available in worsted manufactures, which for-

merly, from the shortness of the staple, it was not. The advance is greater on this than, in proportion, on any other description of wool. It has been down at 7*d*. This advance has taken place without legislative interference, and proves the impropriety of the measures pressed for by the Agriculturists. The markets in the world, which by our prohibition of the importation of foreign wools we had lost, are gradually returning to us."

If the opposition in the House of Commons was not yet prepared for any great display of their forces, in the House of Lords it assumed a bolder front. When the new Corn Bill was sent up, the Duke of Wellington most unexpectedly appeared as the leader of the opposition to a measure which had been proposed and matured, under the immediate superintendence of Lord Liverpool, and which had received the full approbation of the Cabinet, during the time that his Grace had belonged to it. In this opposition he was supported by Lord Bathurst, and an Amendment, ruinous to the principle of the Bill, was carried against all the efforts of Ministers. The Bill, thus vitiated, was abandoned altogether, but not without some sharp animadversions upon the conduct of those whose sudden change of opinion had proved fatal to it.

Certain Resolutions respecting the Corn Trade were subsequently brought forward by Mr. Western, to which Mr. Canning moved and carried an Amendment, which might, in some measure, palliate the inconveniences and disappointment

arising from the loss of Lord Liverpool's Bill. In the course of the discussions, he stated his "earnest wish, that one of the first acts of the legislature, in the ensuing year, might be to reconsider the Act of the present session, and his belief that, by the experience which the House should then have had, they would possess the best means of entering on that reconsideration."

The conduct of the Duke of Wellington upon this occasion was attempted to be justified, both by himself and his friends, upon the alleged misconception of a note of Mr. Huskisson. This misconception, however, was no sooner known, than it had been explained by a second note. The explanation, nevertheless, failed in quelling the opposition which was said to have been founded on the misconception, and the country, which had looked with so much natural anxiety to the passing of the Corn Bill, was doomed to disappointment.*

The session was closed on the 2d of July, and about the middle of the month Mr. Huskisson, who had been earnestly recommended by his physicians to try whether the air of the Continent, and a total abstraction from business, might not have a beneficial effect on his debilitated frame, left England for Calais. On the day before his departure, he saw Mr. Canning, who received him in bed. Struck with the alteration in his looks,

* Vide Speech of the 18th June, 1827.

Mr. Huskisson remarked to him, that he seemed to be the person who stood most in need of change of air, and of relaxation. Mr. Canning answered in a cheerful tone, "Oh! it is only the reflection of the yellow linings of the curtains." This was on the 18th of July. On the 19th, Mr. Huskisson embarked at the Tower, accompanied by Mrs. Huskisson and his private Secretary. On landing at Calais, with the ill-luck which constantly pursued him, he entangled his foot in a cable, and lacerated it so severely, that he was unable to walk for some days. The party rapidly crossed France to Strasburg, and, after a short visit to Baden, proceeded, by the route of Stuttgart and Augsburg, to Munich. Here Mr. Huskisson was induced to remain a few days in the society of Sir Brooke Taylor, the English Minister, and then passed on to Salzburg, intending to go to Bad Gastein, the mountainous and bracing air of which had been strongly recommended to him. At Salzburg he learnt that there would, probably, be much difficulty in procuring accommodations, and though provided with letters of introduction from the different Ambassadors in England, and more particularly from the Prince Esterhazy, yet such was his dislike to any thing that savoured of parade or ostentation, that instead of sending forward a courier to Gastein, or presenting his letters to the Governor of Salzburg, he quietly relinquished his plan, and turned back to Inns-

bruck. On the 11th of August, he reached Innsbruck, and the 12th was the first day in which he appeared really to have derived benefit from his tour. He had recovered from his lameness, and was much pleased with a long walk to the Chateau d'Amras and its environs. Here, too, he had the satisfaction of receiving letters from London, mentioning Mr. Canning's convalescence; and on the 13th, the party set off for the Pass of the Monte Spluga, in better spirits and with brighter hopes than they had yet felt. On that night they slept at Landeck, and on the following afternoon reached Feldkirch, in the Vorarlberg.

Mr. Huskisson's health was now decidedly improving. He had been much interested in the beautiful scenery of the Tirol, and his mind was recovering its wonted elasticity and playfulness,—too soon to be again painfully unstrung. Early on the morning of the 15th instant, just as they were setting off for Coire, an estaffette from Sir Brooke Taylor came in, bearing a letter from Lord Granville at Paris, to announce the alarming turn which Mr. Canning's illness had taken. The route was instantly changed, and on the 20th the party reached the hotel of the English Embassy at Paris, having travelled as fast as his own strength and that of Mrs. Huskisson would permit.

- The fatal termination of Mr. Canning's illness

had become known to him on the road ; but without any of the particulars, or any of the ministerial arrangements subsequently proposed ; and Mr. Huskisson's impression—more than once expressed to his companions on the road—was, that his own political career had closed for ever. The meeting with Lord Granville, the painful details which he had to learn, and the rapidity with which he had travelled, completely exhausted both his physical and moral strength, and rendered some repose absolutely necessary. Nor did the melancholy incitement to tax either beyond their power, in the hope of paying the last mark of public and private regard to his departed friend, then exist ; for the funeral of Mr. Canning had taken place on the 16th, the day after the estaffette reached Feldkirch.

But, beyond the considerations arising from the state of his own health, Mr. Huskisson was decided to remain a few days in Paris, in order to receive some official and definite information respecting the proposed arrangements for supplying the loss of Mr. Canning, and continuing the existing Administration. The expresses which had been dispatched from England, had taken a different route from that by which Mr. Huskisson had returned ; and it was very desirable that either the letters, of which they were the bearers, or fresh ones, should explain to him, before he pursued his journey to England, what were the

intentions of the remaining members of the Administration, in regard to the re-modelling of the Government: as, should he decide on declining any proposals made to him, his plan was to have tried the effect of a winter in the south of Europe; and it has already been stated, that the inclination of his mind, from the first moment in which he heard of the death of his friend and colleague, was to listen to the warning voice of his medical friends, and to withdraw entirely from public life.

On the 23d, one of the expresses arrived. The letters from Lord Goderich communicated, that he had accepted the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and conveyed an offer, couched in the most friendly and handsome terms, of the Colonial Department, which he had vacated, to Mr. Huskisson. Further letters from England announced, that Mr. Grant was, in the event of these proposals being accepted, to succeed to the Presidency of the Board of Trade, and that Lord Lansdowne and the remaining members of Mr. Canning's Government, had declared their acquiescence in these arrangements. All the letters pressed Mr. Huskisson's return without loss of time, and mentioned that the King had expressed his earnest wishes, that no delay might take place in his assuming his new office.

It was not without considerable hesitation,—not, it may safely be asserted, without considerable reluctance — that Mr. Huskisson was persuaded

to decide upon continuing in office. His secret inclinations certainly leant the other way, and he only yielded at last to the arguments and expostulations of his friends; who represented the dissolution of the Government, and the consequent annihilation of Mr. Canning's system of policy, as the too probable result of his refusal,—arguments and expostulations, which were enforced by the special commands of his Sovereign.

That a latent doubt whether his own physical energies were equal to the demands of the new department, over which he was destined to preside, joined to a state of great anxiety and mental depression, arising from the recent misfortune which had deprived him of the friend and colleague, to whose person and policy he was equally attached, and with whom all the recollections of his public life were so intimately and inseparably associated, contributed to foster his present reluctance, is certain; but it may be fairly presumed, that this reluctance might be further increased by a natural fear, whether any other hand than that of Mr. Canning would be found strong enough to hold together the scarcely, as yet, well cemented elements of which the Government was composed, in the face of all the difficulties which threatened it, and the various obstacles which were thrown in its way. It would almost seem that Mr. Huskisson had felt a prophetic misgiving of those complicated and unexpected accidents which,

in a few months, overwhelmed this ill-fated Administration ; so unwillingly did he give his final assent.

He left Paris on the 25th, and on his road to Boulogne received other dispatches, which, in the announcement of the nomination of Mr. Herries as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of the misunderstanding consequent upon it, proved the first confirmation of his apprehensions, and shewed how reasonable had been the doubts which had delayed his own determination. He reached London on the 28th, and on the following morning waited on the King at Windsor, who had been impatiently expecting him. A long negotiation commenced, and after some explanations, and much difficulty, Lord Lansdowne, at His Majesty's special request, consented to withdraw the resignation, which he had tendered ; Mr. Huskisson at the same time accepted the seals of the Colonial Department, and Mr. Herries was sworn in as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Such is the faithful narrative of these transactions, as far as Mr. Huskisson was implicated. With what passed before his arrival in England this Memoir has no concern.

He had now an opportunity of following up those important commercial regulations, with respect to our Colonial Policy, which had occupied so much of his attention at the Board of Trade, and of giving to the improvement, and

careful revision, of the Colonial System, all the resources of his powerful mind. He did not long remain idle. Within less than a month after his appointment, an official dispatch was addressed by him to Sir John Keane, the Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica, which was dated the 22d of September, and filled seven columns of the Jamaica Gazette. This dispatch may safely be pronounced to be a document, not less remarkable for the circumstances under which it was composed, than intrinsically valuable and important, for the ability with which it was executed. The interval between Mr. Huskisson's return, and his entrance upon the duties of the Colonial Department, had been filled with anxious and unremitting exertions to consolidate the new Ministry ; yet, with all the distractions of an unpractised Cabinet, in which he bore his full share, and under the pressure of severe affliction, and of impaired and precarious health, his indefatigable mind found time, in this short period, to master the almost endless details of those thorny and repulsive subjects, which had cost a year's labour to the House of Assembly, and produced a Dispatch, marked throughout with temper, discrimination, comprehensive sagacity, statesman-like power, and a disregard of all selfish clamour ;— a dispatch which, whether it be regarded as an analysis of a vast mass of political questions, or as calculated for the correction of a series of legislative errors, and the guidance of a deliberative

body, has seldom been surpassed. Mr. Huskisson's purpose was to state the objections of the Government at home to the very inefficacious manner in which the House of Assembly of Jamaica attempted, or professed, to carry into execution the principles laid down by the British Parliament, and to fulfil the instructions transmitted by Lord Bathurst. The task was a most ungracious one, but it was performed by a master-hand. So much compression of matter will seldom be found in an official Paper of such voluminous dimensions. Full of all the distinguishing characteristics of his great Speeches,—of perfect courtesy, of admirable simplicity and clearness, of vigour of application, and decision of judgment,—it contains no phrase which is not fraught with some forcible and essential argument, and exhibits the writer possessed with his subject, but holding it under the easiest and most absolute control.

But the labours of Mr. Huskisson in the Colonial Department of his Office soon received a serious interruption. The intelligence which reached England in November of the Battle of Navarino, and the difficulties which shortly after arose in other quarters, paralyzed the proceedings of Government, and threw every thing into a state of doubt and confusion. At length, towards the close of the year, it became generally understood, that Lord Goderich's Administration had melted away like a snow-wreath, and that measures were in progress

for forming a new one. An ineffectual attempt had been previously made to avert the entire dissolution of the existing Government. By command of his Majesty, Mr. Huskisson opened a communication with Lord Harrowby. His lordship waited upon the King at Windsor, but no inducements could prevail upon him to accept the post of prime minister, to which he pleaded his want of health as an insurmountable objection, and this proposed arrangement fell to the ground. A yet further delay then ensued ; and there are strong grounds for believing, that had Mr. Huskisson listened to the voice of ambition, the situation of Minister was within his grasp : but the recent fate of Mr. Canning was a warning, which might have deterred a mind more full of aspiring ambition than Mr. Huskisson's, from accepting, under parallel circumstances, that post, which the fiat of the aristocracy had declared should be held only by one of their own order. After another short interval of doubt, the commission to form a new administration was finally entrusted to the Duke of Wellington ; and before January expired the new arrangements were made public.

Although it is not intended to spin out this Memoir by repeating, and commenting minutely on, the long explanatory Statements which were made when Parliament met, respecting the causes which it was alleged had led to the dissolution of the preceding Government, yet so much unmerited obloquy has been cast upon Mr. Huskisson for

becoming a part of the Duke of Wellington's administration, and so little candour or justice was shewn towards the motives which governed him in this embarrassing conjuncture, that now, when passions are cooled, and prejudice extinguished in the grave, it becomes the duty of his biographer to review those motives fairly and dispassionately. This duty has been rendered the more imperative, because, in a Pamphlet recently published, mention is made of "the political aberrations" of Mr. Huskisson. Now, although any aberration which, in its consequences, might have tended to give strength and efficiency to the Duke of Wellington's Government, would probably have been regarded, if not with favour, at least as venial, in the quarter from which that pamphlet is supposed to have emanated, yet, in the utter ignorance of what other aberration may be hinted at, we will address our defence to this particular one.

The objections which were urged against Mr. Huskisson for remaining in office under the Duke of Wellington may be divided under two heads—those of a private, and those of a public nature. Let us first apply ourselves to the former. It was asserted by some of the family of Mr. Canning, that, in consenting to serve with the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel, Mr. Huskisson was guilty of a violation of what he owed to the memory of Mr. Canning as a private friend. A declaration was, moreover, quoted, purporting to have been made by him, a few days after his return to Eng-

land, to the widow of his departed friend, which stated, "that no power on earth should ever induce him to unite in office with those whom he considered as the destroyers of Mr. Canning."

We will not scrutinize the accuracy of this version; but it is surely insisting rather too much on the strict interpretation of an expression, used at a moment when feelings were warmly excited, to construe any declaration so made as a denunciation of interminable personal hostility. The words which Mr. Huskisson, in his subsequent explanation on this point, stated himself to have used are these, "that his wounds were too green and too fresh to admit of his serving in the same Cabinet with those who had deserted the service of the country, at the time his friend's administration was formed."

That Mr. Huskisson, in the month of August,—enfeebled in body by disease and anxiety, and broken in spirit by the unexpected loss of his dearest friend, and close companion of his whole political career—should have expressed himself as being at the moment unable even to contemplate a reunion with those, whose desertion had probably accelerated the loss so deeply deplored, is not only perfectly natural, but affords another proof—if one were wanting—of the fervour of an attachment, which, as it had shewn itself during life superior to all selfish considerations, continued unabated in death. But even in this early moment of anguish and irritation, Mr. Hus-

kisson's strong sense of public duty would never have permitted him to pronounce an eternal and irreconcilable separation between himself and those, whose services might, at some period, be demanded for the advantage of the Sovereign and the nation. Without raking up the history of political quarrels in order to find precedents to justify political reconciliations, it may, indeed, be asked, whether so extravagant a proposition was ever before brought forward as that, because Mr. Canning had been, as a Minister, abandoned by his colleagues, his friend should, after his death, be held bound to refuse, at all times, to entertain a political connexion with any of those individuals; or that he should be expected to deny to his country, as a public servant, the assistance of his talents and influence? But the best answer that can be made to this charge of violated friendship may be found in the unqualified approbation of his decision on this occasion, which was pronounced by the oldest and most valued friends of Mr. Canning, and in the undiminished esteem and affection with which they continued to regard Mr. Huskisson to the last hour of his existence.

Having dismissed the private charges, the public ones, perhaps, demand more consideration. It was broadly stated, that Mr. Huskisson had sacrificed the liberal policy of the preceding Government, and betrayed his own recorded principles as a public man, to the love of place, by coalescing with those, whose object it was to drive back the

Country into the trammels of the Holy Alliance. That these and similar accusations should have been made, cannot be matter of surprise to any one who will for a moment reflect upon the then state of political parties; for it is evident, that Mr. Huskisson's resolution to continue in office was calculated to give umbrage to all the different divisions of politicians who were not included in the recent arrangement. Hence, the unusual coldness with which his Explanation was received by the House.*

Let us examine the real value of the charges adduced. With respect to the long agitated, and important question of the Catholics, the new Government was undoubtedly in a much more satisfactory position than that of Lord Liverpool had been, and a greater number of its members favourable to any measure of relief. No Government had ever yet been formed which was united on that subject, and it had even been one of the taunts heaped upon Mr. Canning, that he had engaged his promise to the King that, under his administration, it should never be brought forward

* The following passage from a work which has been recently published, affords such a plain and sufficient reason for the violence of the attacks made at this time upon Mr. Huskisson, and is so peculiarly applicable to him, that we cannot resist quoting it, *mutatis mutandis*. "Although it is impossible to assign any just, it is, nevertheless, not difficult to perceive the true, cause of this attempt to fasten a particular responsibility on Mr. Huskisson. It is the business of an opposition to turn out the Government, and their best chance of success is by discrediting the individual on whom its existence depended."—*Political Life of Mr. Canning*, vol. ii. p. 138.

as a measure of the Cabinet. The apologies which have been put forward, in the work already quoted, for Mr. Canning's acceptance of office in 1822, are so unanswerable, on this same subject,—the Catholic question—and they apply so exactly to Mr. Huskisson's situation in 1828, that it would be vain to offer any other defence. It is there truly said,—“Undoubtedly, the Administration stood in need of Mr. Canning's services, and so thought its most influential Members.” “By accepting office he was enabled to give the question all the benefit of his own individual exertions, backed by the weight and authority which a high station in the Government necessarily confers upon the individual who holds it: by refusing he would have left the weight and authority of that station in the hands of an adversary of Emancipation:”—that “Mr. Canning could not have declined to join a divided Cabinet after he had repeatedly declared his conviction, that it was impossible to form an Administration united on this question:”—that “there was no example of a Cabinet concurring in opinion to grant these claims:”—“that the existing Government was as favourable as any, and more favourable than most, by which it had been preceded.” Again, that “he could not have refused to serve under an anti-Catholic Premier, after he had been acting under Lord Liverpool:”—and again, that “no Government could be formed, which would be unanimous on that question, and upon every other of importance, and, in parti-

cular, Reform, which Mr. Canning considered would more vitally affect the existence of the Constitution than the settlement of the Catholic Question." All these passages—and many more might be mentioned—afford a conclusive defence of Mr. Huskisson's conduct, as far as the Catholics were concerned.

With respect to all those measures of domestic and commercial policy which had been sanctioned by Parliament of late years, to all those measures the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel had been parties. They had been equally parties to that system of Foreign Policy which had won for Mr. Canning the admiration and confidence of the nations of the world,—to the expedition to Portugal at the close of 1826, and to the acknowledgment of the new States of America. If the Treaty of the 6th of July were only a natural consequence of the preceding negotiations at St. Petersburg—as was most surely the fact,—of those negotiations the Duke of Wellington was not only cognizant, but he was actually the person who had conducted them, and his signature stood affixed to the Protocol of the 4th of April 1826, the foundation of all that subsequently took place. Let it be considered, in addition to all this, that no opportunity had been afforded for discussing the Foreign Policy of the country since the framing of Mr. Canning's Government, and it was only by unauthenticated rumours, that a departure from his measures could be antici-

pated. But above all, let it be most particularly remembered, that Mr. Peel had unequivocally declared, that on all matters of domestic and general policy, with the exception of the Catholic Question, his opinion was in general accordance with that of Mr. Canning, and that, had he concurred with him upon that great topic, he should have been as ready to take office under him as under Lord Liverpool. If all this were true—if there were really no difference of opinion except on this one question—what becomes of the alleged inconsistency of Mr. Huskisson, and what need of justification or apology? If, on the contrary, there existed an apprehension (which the sequel proved to be well-founded), that the Duke of Wellington's inclination leaned secretly towards the less enlightened of those two great conflicting principles, which threatened to shake the general peace of Europe,—that His Grace bowed rather before the malignant Arimanes, than to the beneficent Oromasdes,—in that supposition, it became more imperatively the duty of a patriotic statesman to weigh carefully and without prejudice what might be his means and what his chances—not of “mastering or circumventing” these unfortunate dispositions, but of removing or counteracting them, by the employment of fair influence and convincing argument. It was surely not calculating improperly upon the candour of the noble Duke to consider him accessible to such influences, or to believe that if once convinced which was “the

better part," he would not hesitate to adopt it. That his Grace was open to conviction has since, indeed, been proved beyond contradiction, both by the change which he sanctioned in the Corn Bill* passed in 1828, and by his conduct on the Catholic Relief Bill in the following year.

The next point is—what were the means, and what were the chances which Mr. Huskisson might reasonably count upon. Let us briefly consider. In the first place, Mr. Canning's arrangement for Ireland was to be carried into execution. No longer framed on an absurd principle of affected neutrality, it exhibited, for the first time since the Viceroyalty of the Duke of Bedford, an executive Government whose opinions were in unison in favour of the Catholics. No change was made in the Foreign Department, or in Mr. Canning's diplomatic arrangements. His friends and relations remained at their posts. At St. Petersburg—at Paris—at Constantinople—the same individuals conducted the negotiations of the British Cabinet. Was not this a virtual assurance, that the same policy would be persevered in? Were not Lord Anglesey and Mr. Lamb guarantees for fair play towards the Catholics? Were not Lord Dudley (who had signed the famous Treaty of the

* In regard to the Corn Bill, the Duke of Wellington stated, on the very first night of the meeting of Parliament, that the new Government intended "to propose a measure, early in the Session, for the regulation of the Corn Laws, *founded on the principle of the measure proposed and rejected in the last year.*" His Grace further announced, that he had resigned the post of Commander in Chief.

6th of July), Lord Granville, and Sir Stratford Canning, guarantees for our Foreign Policy? Who had selected and appointed these noble persons? Whom did they represent in the eyes of the world? Were they not one and all bound in honour to suffer no departure from those principles, which had been laid down as the rule of their conduct, and of which they were the chosen instruments? What had made Mr. Grant so peculiarly eligible to preside over the Commercial Department? What had made the admission of Lord Palmerston to the Cabinet so desirable? Their abilities.—Certainly, their abilities,—but yet more the known liberality of their political principles. Were not these mighty instruments to work with? Were not these guarantees,—and the strongest which human ingenuity could devise? The only ones which could be offered or received between gentlemen.

Let us think, for a moment, what was the construction of the remainder of the Cabinet of the Duke of Wellington. Himself, the negotiator of the Protocol of April 1826 — Lord Lyndhurst, called to his high office by Mr. Canning — Mr. Peel, the colleague and avowed supporter of all Mr. Canning's policy, the Catholic Question only excepted. Such were the influential Members of this Cabinet, the only ones who held departments which would give them weight in its Councils. Is there at this day any dispassionate person who will deny that here was sufficient—if not to justify

the indulgence of sanguine confidence—at least to present a reasonable hope to Mr. Huskisson, that he should be enabled to keep in vigour and progression the same system of foreign, domestic, and commercial Policy, which had shed such lustre over that period of our history, during which the genius of Mr. Canning was supposed to have reigned triumphant?

But, notwithstanding these fair expectations, it was proved, by what fell from Mr. Huskisson, on his subsequent removal from Office, that he was neither blind to the possibility, nor insensible to the danger, of the experiment failing, although he thought that he saw in the chances which it offered sufficient grounds to justify the attempt. In then explaining the motives by which he had been actuated in joining the Duke of Wellington's Government, he used these remarkable words, "When I consented to remain in office at the formation of the noble Duke's administration, I did so contrary to the judgment and to the advice of many friends ;—I did so exclusively upon public grounds ;—upon an offer, in which I understood that so many of those with whom I had acted in the former administration were included, that I did not think we should be justified, when our assistance was asked for, in withholding it from the public service, I thought that in our joint acceptance,—in our known similarity of opinion,—in the executive departments which we filled,—in our mutual co-operation of confidence,—and in the explana-

tions which we had received, we were more likely to uphold the principles and policy, to which we were attached, than by any other course of conduct." It was known, too, from his own authority, that he would have viewed with pleasure any arrangement, by which Lord Lansdowne and Lord Carlisle could have been comprehended in the new Government; but, however sincere were his wishes, he had neither the power to enforce, nor the permission of those noble personages to urge, them.

Let the picture be now reversed, and let it be seen what would have been the consequences had Mr. Huskisson refused to meet the advances of the Duke of Wellington. Only one alternative would then have remained to his Grace. He must have reunited himself to, and identified himself with, the Ultra, or anti-liberal, party. There was no other course open;—for, however the fact might be disguised at the time, it is now generally understood and admitted, that (could all other obstacles have been surmounted) so strong a personal objection existed in a high quarter against Lord Grey, as to render any arrangement which comprehended the introduction of that nobleman into the Cabinet impracticable. Here, then, in the union with the Ultras, all hopes for future improvement, all confidence of retaining the benefits of the past measures, would have been at once shipwrecked and lost. The evil principle would have re-assumed the ascendancy; a few months of such a Government would

have destroyed the labours of years, and the dying prophecy of Mr. Canning have been at once accomplished. Then, indeed, might the friends and admirers of Mr. Canning's principles have reproached Mr. Huskisson, not only with sacrificing to private resentments, and to suspicions, possibly unfounded, the best interests of the Country ; but with having lightly and wantonly, rejected the only chance which remained of maintaining the policy, and perfecting the views of that lamented Minister.*

Let us pursue this investigation, and consider what would have been the further consequences of such a refusal to join the Duke of Wellington. Mr. Huskisson must then have identified himself

* The following justification of Mr. Canning's conduct, in retaining office in 1825, is so full of forcible reasoning, and that reasoning is so much in point here, that we must once more borrow from the Author of the "Political Life" of that Statesman. "Mr. Canning had recently and anxiously deliberated upon the expediency of his resignation ; moreover, he was only prevented from tendering it by the entire conviction, that the consequences of his so doing, would have been to have left the field open to the Ultra Party, who would have been able to have formed a Government which would have lasted, at any rate, sufficiently long to have done incalculable mischief, to retard the settlement of the Roman Catholic Question, and to have destroyed on other points, especially on Foreign Policy, all the good, of which he had laid the foundations, and of which he was just beginning to witness the effects. To have quitted office then would surely have been most unwise, without a moral certainty that he would by that step have advanced the Catholic cause. But under the belief which he entertained, that his retirement would have injured the cause, it would have been little short of madness, especially since the Catholic was not the only Question of the time. 'There are,' said he, in a private letter, 'others which, under existing circumstances, I should think it a desertion of duty to throw loose by resigning.'"

with the Whigs, and have beheld himself, and those who acted with him, absorbed in a party, to which he had been politically opposed during all but the few last months of his life. Under the circumstances which attended the dissolution of Lord Goderich's Government, such must have been the case. It would have been impracticable for Mr. Huskisson and his friends (even supposing they had approved of, and imitated, his decision) to have steered any middle course, or, at least, to have persevered in it for any length of time. They would have found themselves placed in a false position; and, from that moment, the name and party of Mr. Canning would have been swallowed up in that of the Whigs, especially if—as would surely have been the case—(Lord Grey not coalescing with the Duke of Wellington)—the schism among the Whigs had been extinguished, and the two branches re-united. Was this the consummation which Mr. Canning's family foresaw, or foreseeing desired, when they blamed so severely the opposite course pursued by Mr. Huskisson? Was this what Mr. Canning himself would have recommended, could he have foretold the events which succeeded his death? His own conduct, his own words at the time when he formed his administration—"the Whigs joined me, not I them"—forbid the supposition. Moreover, no one asserted, that Mr. Huskisson was bound to the Whigs by any ties or engagements. They themselves frankly admitted that, however much they

deprecated and regretted his severing from them at this moment, he was free and independent to determine his own line of conduct, without incurring the imputation of the slightest breach of political obligation towards them.

But if, on the other hand, all differences of opinion could have been approximated, all obstacles, in whatever quarter, smoothed, and the Duke of Wellington and Lord Grey had coalesced,—Mr. Huskisson equally sacrificed the name and party of Mr. Canning, and without purpose; for it is absurd to imagine, that a party which, even in power could not retain the reins of Government, should be able, unassisted, to win their way back again, against such a combination as that here supposed to have taken place. Turn the question which way you will, the result is always the same—always fatal to the name and party of Mr. Canning.

There remains, it is hoped, but one other point to notice, which may be dismissed in a few words—the alleged inconsistency of Mr. Huskisson in consenting to form part of an Administration in which Mr. Herries was comprised, after what had passed between them so recently. Surely every one must admit, that the “accompanying circumstances,” which had given an adventitious importance to the original ground of difference, had ceased, and that to have made the appointment of Mr. Herries to the Mastership of the Mint a pretext for breaking off a negotiation, when all material points had been conceded, would have justly exposed Mr. Hus-

kisson to an imputation both of presumption and insincerity.

Mr. Huskisson was re-elected for Liverpool without opposition, and took his seat in the House of Commons on the 11th of February. In the interval, much notice had been attracted to the report of something which was said to have fallen from him during his election, when explaining the motives of his continuance in office, respecting certain guarantees received from the Duke of Wellington; and some unpleasant and angry feelings were manifested, which augured ill for the cordiality of future proceedings. Several allusions were made to this expression in both Houses, and the Duke of Wellington rather warmly repudiated the idea, that he could have been guilty of giving any guarantee for his future conduct. The business was, however, satisfactorily explained by Mr. Huskisson on the 18th of February, when Lord Normanby brought on a discussion respecting the dissolution of the last, and the conduct of Mr. Huskisson in joining the present Government, and the letter which was read from Mr. Shepherd on that occasion, set the question of the "guarantee" finally at rest.*

The high estimation in which Mr. Huskisson was held was strikingly manifested, when the appointment of the Committee of Finance was

* Mr. Huskisson always expressed himself warmly sensible of the very handsome and liberal conduct of Mr. Shepherd, at a moment when party animosities were so highly excited.

moved. He had declined being placed upon it, from a feeling, that neither his official duties, nor the state of his health, would allow of his regular attendance on this arduous investigation. The list of names having been read, Mr. Baring rose and observed, that "without any disrespect to the Members composing the Committee, I may be permitted to say, that the whole aggregate amount of their financial knowledge bears no proportion to that possessed by the Right Honourable Gentleman. His information and research have penetrated into every corner of our financial and commercial systems, and to except him from the Committee is to shut out the greatest light that can be thrown upon the subjects to be therein discussed." To this high eulogium Mr. Brougham added, that "the knowledge of all the other members combined was as nothing—as dust in the balance, compared with the resources of his mind." Proud and unimpeachable testimonies, extorted from the candour of political opponents, at a moment when party feelings were so strongly inflamed! Mr. Huskisson was consequently induced to forego his objections, and his name was added to the Committee.

He now again, to use his own words, "applied himself earnestly and indefatigably to the amelioration of the Colonial system, to strengthen the bonds which attached our distant possessions to the mother country, and to bring forward, expound, improve, and perfect measures

connected with the foreign commerce, and the internal industry of this country ;"—objects to which his attention had been long sedulously applied. Strong hopes were entertained, that leisure would be afforded for following up and realizing the expectations which had been raised on his first appointment to his present important office, and that his administration of the Colonial department would be signalized by reforms and improvements, similar to those which had marked the period during which he presided at the Board of Trade. If the hopes and expectations of the public were not completely realized,—if the benefits derived from his direction did not entirely reach the high character which his former services and achievements had established—it must be taken into consideration, that, independently of those very delicate and complicated questions of Colonial policy with which he had to deal—the condition of the Slave Population of our West-India Colonies, the discontent and dissensions which prevailed in Canada, and the state of the rapidly increasing Population of our Australian possessions,—he was obliged, at the same time, to keep up an active official correspondence with the Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, the critical position of which, with regard to Greece, was of a nature to require the greatest precautions ;—while the embarrassments of our Foreign policy, and the long discussions on the preparation of the Corn Bill, every figure of which gave rise to

almost interminable alterations and endless expedients to reconcile the different opinions of the opposing parties, perpetually called him off from the business of his department to deliberations of a more general nature. To these interruptions may be added, the proceedings which unsettled the latter part of Lord Goderich's administration, the interregnum which succeeded, the re-election for Liverpool, and, finally, a fatiguing attendance on the Finance Committee. It is not, then, to be wondered at, that the eight months during which Mr. Huskisson held the seals of the Colonial Office, however indefatigable his labours, offered to the Public rather the preparations for, and the earnest of, what a longer continuance there might have ripened and brought forth, than much that was actually accomplished.

But besides his correspondence with Sir John Keane, to which we have already adverted, the few months of Mr. Huskisson's Colonial administration were marked by other important measures,—by the appointment of a Committee to examine into the state of the Canadas, where strong dissatisfaction and growing discontent had long prevailed,—by a Bill to provide for the Administration of Justice in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, and by the first step towards the accomplishment of an object, which, in common with every friend of humanity, he had earnestly at heart,—the gradual reduction of our establishments on the Slave Coast of Africa,—the with-

drawing of our garrisons from the forts on the Gold Coast.*

His Correspondence with the Governors of the West-India Colonies sufficiently proves how earnestly he endeavoured to impress on the Colonial Legislatures the necessity as well as wisdom of giving effect, without delay, to the Resolutions of the British Parliament; and how carefully and steadily he applied himself to devise means materially to improve the civil and moral condition of the Slave Population. The speeches which he delivered on moving the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the state of the Canadas, and on the discussions of the Bill for the regulation of the Government of New South Wales, are not only full of the most liberal sentiments respecting the treatment by the mother country of those important Colonies, but exhibit such an

* In the month of May 1830, a conversation arose in the House of Commons on the abuses of the Colonial System, when Mr. Marryatt paid the following honourable compliment to the exertions made by Mr. Huskisson, and to the hopes derived from them, during the short period in which he held the seals of that department:

“The task is truly Herculean; but I trust, as there exists the desire, so the means of reformation will not be wanting. I should state, that during the short period in which the right honourable member for Liverpool held the seals of the Colonial Office, a ray of light beamed upon this unfortunate colony (the Cape of Good Hope). The energetic measures of reformation which he had time only to commence, and which gave a promise of brighter days, ceased however with his removal from office. That event was much regretted by the Colonists; who had begun to congratulate themselves on being under the control of a Minister, who was both willing and able to carry his beneficial plans into effect.”

intimate knowledge of their present state and comprehensive views for their future prosperity, as could only have been acquired by the most patient research and impartial communication with every source of information which was open to him.

Mr. Huskisson, with the other members of Government in the House of Commons, opposed Lord John Russell's Bill for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts ; but his opposition on this occasion did not impugn the sincerity of his principles in favour of religious toleration, and he thus explained and defended the grounds of it :—
“ I am not, abstractedly, unfriendly to the proposition, but I cannot assent to it, because I am sure that, with reference to the Catholic Claims, it will make a bad impression. I am convinced that the present measure, so far from being a step in favour of the Catholic Claims, would, if successful, be the means of arraying an additional power against them.”

On these impressions he founded his opposition to the Bill, and though, fortunately, those impressions proved afterwards, to a certain extent, erroneous, yet were they not wholly visionary.

The months of March and April were principally consumed in debates upon the Corn Bill ; and from the tone of the discussions, the public thought they could gather a confirmation of the reports which had very generally prevailed, of considerable dissensions among the Ministers

respecting the provisions of the Bill. Neither Mr. Grant nor Mr. Huskisson professed to consider the scale of duties as without objection, and contented themselves with recommending the arrangement as the best which, under all circumstances, could be at present realized. But, while Mr. Huskisson was taunted in the House of Commons with having consented to compromise his former opinions on the Corn Laws, it was strongly suspected, that the Duke of Wellington had met with a firmer resistance among his liberal colleagues than he had anticipated, and that he, on his part, found the task of introducing the new Bill rather an unpalatable comment upon his opposition to that of the former year. In fact, the omission in the present Bill, of that clause which had proved fatal to the one of the preceding year, without the substitution of any provision, which might operate to produce the effect, for which his Grace had then interfered, must have been a mortification, which the slight advantage gained in the scale of duties can not be supposed to have compensated. Whatever may be thought as to the relative merits of the two Bills, it must be borne in mind, that Mr. Canning had expressed his wish, that the measure "should be reconsidered," and that it was evident he had contemplated the necessity of some *mezzo termine*, which might soften the opposition he had experienced. What the exact nature of those modifications was, it is impossible to say ; but it is probable, that they would have given a greater

protection to agriculture. That such would have been their effect, it is reasonable to infer; because Mr. Canning, as a practical statesman, would have been obliged to look for a practical result, in an arbitration between conflicting opinions, and he would therefore, probably, have introduced such a measure as might have been agreed to by all parties. It has been well observed, that parties, as well as individuals, frequently break down through the ambition of accomplishing too much, and,—through the same process—by rousing into opposition those who would have yielded to, or favoured, more temperate pretensions. In striving to attain objects which they have not strength to grasp, or to preserve, they lose those benefits which they might readily accomplish.

However strong the suspicions of disunion in the Cabinet, no open proof appeared to confirm them, and with the passing of the Corn Bill, whatever differences of opinion might have occurred, were supposed to have subsided with the cause which had provoked them. Without entering upon the wide field of our Corn Laws, we have Mr. Huskisson's own authority, on a later occasion, for stating, that "however expedient to prevent other evils in the present state of the country, they are in themselves a burthen and a restraint upon its manufacturing and commercial industry:" and it is well known, that some of the best practical authorities of the present day are decidedly in favour of repealing the existing

system, and substituting a free trade under a moderate protection.

Mr. Huskisson knew that he was regarded with a suspicious and jealous eye by what is termed the Agricultural interest, and in the course of the debates on the propriety of disfranchising East Retford, and transferring the right of election to one of the great manufacturing towns, he thus plainly alluded to the circumstance :—" It has sometimes been said, I know not on what grounds, that I am not a friend to the Agricultural interest ; but I feel the less uneasy under an imputation of that nature, as I am persuaded that an enlarged view of the policy which I have always recommended, cannot fail to lead to the conclusion, that I have uniformly supported those principles which are best calculated to promote the general interests of each class, and, as a consequence, the good of the whole community."

Nothing could have been contrived more conducive to the revival of whatever jealousies and conflicting opinions lay smothered under the outward appearance of harmonious accordance worn by the Government, than the different events which had successively arisen since the meeting of Parliament. The misunderstanding respecting the expression "guarantee" was no sooner smoothed away, than the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was carried against all the efforts of the leading minister in the Lower House ; the Corn Laws next ensued, and presented a fertile

source of dispute. To these succeeded the Catholic Question. The defeat on this last occasion was the more galling, when it was remembered what had been the division, and under what circumstances, of the preceding year.

What might be the precise effect of all these collisions and defeats on the cordiality of the different members of the Administration, it is impossible to say ; but when, on the 14th of May, Lord Palmerston, in reply to an observation from Lord Chandos, unhesitatingly declared—"I believe that Mr. Canning's principles and policy were most excellently adapted for the benefit of this country; and that as the principles which emanated from him are followed, just in that proportion will those who adopt them conduce to its interest and advantage, and obtain for their government the confidence and approbation of the people,"—every one imagined, that he saw in such a declaration something which portended fresh ministerial commotions.

On the 12th of May, Mr. Huskisson, contrary to the practice which he had usually followed during the life of Mr. Canning, made an able and argumentative speech in favour of the Catholics. On the 13th, he spoke feelingly and eloquently for granting to the son of Mr. Canning, under the Offices Pensions act, an annuity of £3,000 a-year. It is rather a singular circumstance, that almost the last exertion of his influence as a Minister was to obtain the concurrence of the Government to this

pension being granted for the joint lives of the two sons of Mr. Canning, with benefit of survivorship. Every one is aware that, but for this extension of the grant, the intention of Parliament would have been rendered nugatory, by the untimely death of the eldest son, in the course of the following summer. On the 19th, the discussion on East Retford terminated Mr. Huskisson's career as a Minister.

The Parliamentary Explanation which followed the removal of Mr. Huskisson is already before the public, and will be found amongst the speeches in these volumes. It is unnecessary to recapitulate, in this place, the whole of the details. The case, indeed, appears to resolve itself into this—that, acting upon the impulse of feelings the most honourable and disinterested, Mr. Huskisson did not, perhaps, allow himself time for cool consideration, and thus afforded an opportunity of removing him from the Government, of which the Duke of Wellington not unwillingly availed himself, though he endeavoured to fix the blame of the proceeding upon his colleague.

Public men, and especially such as hold high and responsible situations in a Government, are not justified in abandoning the public service upon light grounds, or upon the impulse of personal feelings, however honourable; and Mr. Huskisson was naturally most anxious, for many reasons, to set himself right in this respect, and

to show that the responsibility of breaking up the Government, from so inadequate a cause, did not rest with him, but with the Duke of Wellington. Hence arose all the communications with his Grace, which took place after the second letter of Mr. Huskisson, dated the evening of the 20th of May.

It may be admitted, that Mr. Huskisson did, perhaps, suffer the feelings of the man a little to outrun the prudence of the Minister, and that his first letter to the Duke of Wellington might have been more cautiously worded, had it been postponed for a few hours longer, instead of being written at two o'clock in the morning, under the recent excitement of the several concurring circumstances of irritation, which had taken place in the House of Commons, and upon his leaving it. A communication to the same effect, however, would equally "out of honour and courtesy" have been made to the Noble Duke at a later hour (as it had been, in 1822, to Lord Liverpool), and, probably, the result would have been the same; since a misconception might still have arisen similar to that which prompted his Grace to lay before the King a letter, evidently unfit for the purpose of conveying to his Majesty the resignation of a Secretary of State.

The Duke of Wellington said, that the "letter surprised him much;" but "notwithstanding such surprise—without seeking any explanation—without any communication with Mr. Huskisson

“—without allowing himself time to consider
“ whether his own construction of this letter was,
“ or was not, open to doubt,—the Noble Duke
“ hurried to St. James’s, and laid that which,
“ in the abandonment of confidence, had been
“ intended only as an act of delicacy towards him-
“ self, at the foot of the Throne, advising his Ma-
“ jesty that it was a positive and formal resigna-
“ tion.”*

We admit that we cannot but agree with Lord Palmerston,†—(we quote from the speech of the Noble Lord),—“ that, drawing inferences and judging from the facts, we cannot see any one, in the whole course of these transactions, from the beginning to the end, which indicates a desire to retain Mr. Huskisson in office, but many which are perfectly reconcilable with a desire for his retirement.”

To sum up all these explanations, it may, perhaps, be permitted to doubt, without intending to convey any disparagement of the value of public opinion generally, whether the public be not usually inclined to view questions of this nature too much in the light of transactions between private individuals, and to regard the retirement of a Minister as an affair merely personal. Without considering the various interests, both public and private, which are involved in the decision

* Vide Speech of the 2d June 1828.

† The manly speech of Lord Palmerston on this occasion can never be forgotten by the friends of Mr. Huskisson.

of this single person—the placing in jeopardy, perhaps the annihilation of, a course of policy, which it may have been the labour of years to have established,—or the destruction of the fortunes and prospects of political adherents—overlooking all these powerful reasons for not lightly or hastily abandoning office, the public are too apt to imagine, that the bare fact of non-resignation, where any particular measure may not be conceded by his colleagues, or where any difference arises, argues an inconsistency of character, and evinces a tenacity of place, which are stigmatized as something calculated to destroy confidence in the integrity and sincerity of a Minister. Such deductions may suit the temporary purposes of political opponents, and afford fair weapons of political warfare, but they are unworthy of those who weigh the difficulties with which high office is environed attentively and dispassionately; nor, if the justice of them be maintained, can any age or country hope to present a statesman against whom such charges may not be advanced.

Mr. Huskisson's removal was followed by the resignation of Lords Dudley and Palmerston, of Mr. Grant, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Frankland Lewis, and Lord Howard de Walden. Lord Granville left Paris, and other changes subsequently occurred in the diplomatic arrangements.

Mr. Huskisson did not take much part in the business of the House during the remainder of the session, which offered little of interest; but pre-

vious to the close of it, in calling for Copies of the American Tariff, he prefaced the motion with one of those able speeches with which he was wont to rivet the attention of his hearers, whenever he addressed them on points of financial or commercial interest, and laid down and commented on, the policy which ought to regulate the intercourse of this country with the United States, in his usual luminous and forcible manner.

The following correspondence, which took place after his removal from office, will serve to show the estimation in which he was held among the enlightened manufacturers of the country, and the sense which they entertained of the benefits derived from the measures which he had brought forward and supported.

“ Manchester Chamber of Commerce and
“ Manufactures,

“ SIR :

“ July 16th, 1828.

“ I have the honour to transmit a Vote of Thanks, from the Directors of this Chamber, expressive of the obligations which they feel that the country is under for the services you have rendered to it, in the important offices of state which you have been successively called upon to fill.

“ Of some of the measures of policy brought forward under your sanction, the Board of Directors has before expressed its favourable opinion; and although, with respect to others, its members may occasionally have entertained some degree of doubt, they are desirous, on your retirement from office, of conveying to you their honest be-

lief, that the general scope and tendency of those measures, as a whole, have been eminently conducive to the welfare of the community at large, and demand from them the expression of their respect and gratitude.

" I feel particularly happy in being the organ of this communication, and in the opportunity thus afforded me of declaring, individually, my hearty concurrence in the sentiments of my colleagues.

" I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) " GEO. WM. WOOD,

" President."

" The Right Hon.

" Wm. Huskisson."

" At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, held 16th July 1828,

" GEORGE WILLIAM WOOD, Esq. President, in the Chair,

" It was resolved unanimously,

" That the Thanks of this Board be communicated to the Right Hon. William Huskisson, late Secretary of State for the Colonies, for the enlightened, judicious and valuable services which, whilst a Minister of the Crown, he has rendered to the commerce of the country—services which have had for their object the permanent prosperity of the State, and which, it is the sincere and deliberate opinion of this Board, will, in their general character and consequences, materially promote the true and lasting welfare of all classes of his Majesty's subjects.

" GEO. WM. WOOD,

" President."

To this flattering mark of approbation Mr. Huskisson returned the following answer :

“ Eartham, Petworth,

“ SIR :

“ 20th July 1828.

“ Your letter of the 16th instant, transmitting to me an unanimous resolution of the Board of Directors of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, was received by me yesterday.

“ The unexpected honour conferred upon me by this distinguished mark of their approbation, is to me personally most gratifying.

“ Greatly, however, as I value so flattering a reward of my endeavours to promote the interests and prosperity of our country, I should very inadequately convey all that I feel on this occasion, were I to confine myself to the expression of my individual thanks.

“ In one sense, indeed, except to myself, it may be matter of little moment, that my labours, as a late servant of the Crown, are viewed so favourably by the Board over which you preside. But, in another sense, looking to that Board as representing the sentiments of the largest manufacturing community in the kingdom, it is, I conceive, highly important, upon public grounds, that the system of Commercial and Colonial Policy, which it has been my official duty to carry into effect, should be stamped with their deliberate sanction and concurrence, as tending, in its “ general character and consequences, materially to promote the true and lasting welfare of all classes of his Majesty’s subjects.”

“ In thanking you, Sir, for the very handsome manner in which you have conveyed to me the Resolution of the Board, I have to request that you will take a proper opportunity of tendering to the Directors my grateful acknowledgment of the sense which they have been pleased to express of my public conduct, and the assurance that, as a private member of Parliament, I shall, at all times, be ready to receive from them any suggestions which they

may consider calculated to assist the Industry, and promote the Commerce of this country.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) “ W. HUSKISSON.”

“ Geo. Wm. Wood, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.”

His health, which had never perfectly recovered from the severe attack of the preceding year, had been still further shaken by the almost constant anxiety of mind to which he had been exposed, from the moment he heard of Mr. Canning's alarming illness, and by the laborious duties of his office. His physicians were, therefore, urgent in their recommendations that he should again try the influence of the air of the continent, which he could now enjoy for a longer period; and the recollection of the benefit which he had begun to derive, when his journey was so fatally terminated in the preceding summer, determined him to comply with their advice. Towards the end of July, he and Mrs. Huskisson proceeded to Switzerland. The season proved very unfavourable for the enjoyment of the scenery of that country, and they therefore crossed the Alps, and after spending a week at Venice, were induced to continue their journey to Rome. Mr. Huskisson had wished to travel as privately as possible, and had in consequence again declined to make use of any of the letters of introduction with which he had been furnished; but at Rome, it being intimated to him, that the Pope felt a strong desire to receive

so firm an advocate of the cause of the English and Irish Catholics, he was presented to his Holiness, and met with a most flattering reception. Private business, which demanded his presence in England, determined him to relinquish Naples, and he returned to England early in November.

The following session was principally occupied with the all-engrossing subject of the Catholic Relief Bill. Nothing could have redounded more to the honour of those distinguished persons, who had so long been the zealous and consistent advocates of such a measure, than their conduct during the whole of the discussions. Far from taunting the Ministers who initiated the Bill with their former opinions, they were content to yield to them the glory of this great act of justice, and to see the civic wreath, which they had so long vainly struggled to win, adorn the brows of those who had hitherto thwarted their endeavours. It will be for posterity to decide to whom that wreath is in justice due,—whether to those who, through a long series of years,—through good report and evil report—sacrificed to the promotion of the Catholic cause their own hopes of power and prospects of ambition; or to those who, having continued obstinately deaf to the arguments of reason, of equity, and of prudence, yielded at last to the stern mandates of intimidation or necessity, a tardy consent, which a too long denial had robbed of half its grace. On one point alone

can unmixed approbation be conceded to the Ministers. The Bill was clogged and defaced by no securities, no absurd oaths and vexatious limitations. Mr. Huskisson took an early opportunity of expressing his satisfaction at the course which the Government had resolved on pursuing, while, at the same time, he could not refrain from expressing his regret, that the conversion of some of its Members had not taken place at an earlier period, when that lamented friend, whose unceasing exertions, whose splendid eloquence, and whose brilliant talents had so greatly contributed to forward and mature this interesting question, both in Parliament and in the mind of the Public, —might have witnessed the triumph of his labours. Throughout the long discussions to which this Bill gave rise, he offered to the Government an active and powerful support, and his name occurs in almost all the debates on the subject.

Unwilling in any way to endanger, or even to impede, the progress of this great measure, he contented himself with stating the grounds of his dislike to the Bill for the immediate disfranchisement of the forty shilling freeholders of Ireland, and declined taking any further steps to oppose it, when he found that Government made its acceptance a *sine qua non* to the passing of the Relief Bill.

All other questions dwindled into insignificance before the importance of this. Our foreign policy was forgotten, or placed in abeyance, and modern

times scarcely afford an instance of a session, in which the opposition to Government—that only excepted which was offered to the Catholic Bill by the zealous Protestant party—has been so completely suspended. But, notwithstanding that all general and organized opposition to the Ministers was stilled by this long-wished-for boon, many discussions arose of public interest, in which Mr. Huskisson took a prominent part, and displayed his profound knowledge and liberal views. When the state of the Silk Trade was once more brought under the consideration of Parliament by Mr. Fyler, the Member for Coventry, Mr. Huskisson came forward to maintain and defend those principles of trade, which he had so long advocated, and declared that experience only confirmed him in the conviction, that a gradual relaxation of the restrictive system was invariably followed by a gradual improvement in manufactures, commerce, and revenue. Mr. Baring having alluded to the vituperation, the endless obloquy and calumny, which had been heaped upon him, as the organ of the Government by which the changes in our commercial system had been effected, Mr. Huskisson avowed, that all this he had foreseen and been prepared to encounter, at the time when he felt it his duty to recommend those alterations; but he had also received his reward. In defending the principles, and exposing the advantages, of the new system, he more particularly called the attention of the House “to the fact, unprece-

dented in our history, that for fifteen years this country had enjoyed a commercial peace with the world,—that, for the first time, during so many years, Parliament had not been called upon by the Crown to protect, with a naval and military force, some colonial or commercial right, or to resist some commercial outrage.”* Perhaps there will nowhere be found, in the numerous speeches of Mr. Huskisson, a passage more exquisite than the peroration of this one presents. Its effect was conclusive, and the Silk Question, that fertile source of debate for the last four sessions, now received its quietus.

Before finally dismissing the Silk Question, we will just mention two circumstances which occurred in the spring of 1830, as confirmatory of the wisdom which had framed, and the success which had crowned, the changes made in the laws regulating this branch of our national industry. The one was a letter from an officer of the port of Bristol to Mr. Huskisson, mentioning an exportation of manufactured silk from that place—a thing

* This remark will be found repeated by Mr. Huskisson on several occasions. It was one on which he felt particular satisfaction in dwelling; and his conviction in the wisdom of his system was strengthened by the consideration, that three-fourths of the wars which have desolated Europe for the last two centuries, had had their origin in the irritation caused by commercial prohibition, and that if there were any human invention by which a state of universal and perpetual peace could be secured, the secret of it would be found in a free trade, the application of which might bind nations together by the strongest and most indissoluble ties of which mankind is susceptible—those of common interest and reciprocal advantage.

unprecedented; the other, an intimation, which was conveyed to him from undoubted authority, that the principal manufacturers of Macclesfield admitted him to have been perfectly right in the measures which he had brought forward,—that they had been in error in opposing them, and that their trade was in the most flourishing condition.

When we look to what has recently passed—to what is still passing—and view the rapid strides which the question of Parliamentary Reform has made within the last two years, it is impossible not to admire the clearness of foresight which enabled Mr. Huskisson, in this session, to predict the consequences which must ensue from the line of policy so obstinately persevered in by Government, in respect to the disfranchisement of East Retford. Satisfied that, from the undisguised support given by the Minister to the amendment, which went to throw the representation into the Hundred of Bassetlaw, that amendment must be successful, he expressed his feelings of the danger of such conduct in these forcible terms:—"I shall regret this success, because I cannot help thinking, that it will be at variance with the sentiments generally entertained by the sound and intelligent part of the community:—I shall regret this success, because I am convinced that it will increase, in the public mind, the feeling which already exists in favour of Parliamentary Reform:—I shall regret this success, because I feel that it will ensure the adoption of

a course, which must pave the way for a measure so fatal in its consequences as a general Parliamentary Reform." He warned the House, that if this amendment were carried, they would see Parliamentary Reform, backed by public opinion and the influence of the press, made an annual question of discussion. Before he sat down he noticed the charges brought against him, of being addicted to theories and dangerous innovations. Such charges he denied, and dared the authors of them to meet him upon the proof. He called upon those who talked of the dangers of innovation to remember, with Lord Bacon, that "Time was the great Innovator," and that it was the business of a Statesman to move onwards with the new combinations which had grown around him. Such were Mr. Huskisson's feelings, as declared in this masterly and constitutional Speech, which will now be read with increased interest, from the manner in which its predictions have since been fulfilled. It is necessary to dwell upon Mr. Huskisson's language and reasoning on this important question, and to watch with what cautious, prudent, and steady steps he advanced towards it; and as he may be supposed, in a great measure, to have represented Mr. Canning's opinions, and to have guided himself by what he considered would have been his course in the new combinations which had arisen, this contemplation receives an additional interest.

In all the discussions which arose with respect

to the future arrangements to be made on the renewal of the East-India Company's Charter, Mr. Huskisson took a warm interest, both as member for Liverpool, and in reference to the great public commercial interests involved in it. But he did not confine his views to the narrow limits of commercial considerations. His enlightened mind embraced topics of infinitely higher importance,—topics which involved the tranquillity and happiness of millions of subjects, who looked to this country for protection,—the improvement in civilization, the increase of comforts; and the exaltation of the moral character of the natives of India. All these formed cogent reasons for a full, fair, and deliberate inquiry into the condition of that vast Empire, and into the manner in which its Government was conducted, and its intercourse with this country managed. Upon an understanding, however, that the Government itself would move for the appointment of a Committee to investigate the whole question in the following session, he acquiesced in the delay of a year. At the same time, he frankly declared, that his impressions were strongly in favour of further relaxations, and pointed to Singapore as a glorious instance of the immense advantages derivable from free trade. With respect to China, he used this forcible expression: —“ Seize the advantages which present themselves to your grasp, even now, while you yet may;” and added, as his opinion, “ that the

question of a more extended intercourse with that country might—if a Committee were appointed—be arranged at an earlier period than the expiration of the charter in 1834.

Here, as on so many other occasions, he incurred the displeasure of the zealots of both extremes. While the Directors of the East-India Company regarded him as harbouring the wish to invade their chartered rights, the opposite party reproached him for recommending a postponement till the following year. Such is ever the fate of those who endeavour to steer themselves by the light of moderate and practical reform, and who strive to modify, rather than to force, the pressure of circumstances!

It is probable that Mr. Huskisson felt an additional interest in the settlement of the India Question, and that he had turned his mind more closely to the consideration of it, from the circumstance, that it had more than once been proposed to him to proceed thither. The Government of Madras had been offered to him previous to the appointment of Sir Thomas Monro, and it was principally from the opinions of his medical advisers, as well as from his own indifference to wealth, that he determined to decline it. At a later period there is little reason to doubt, that the supreme Government of India might have been his. It is true that no positive offer was made to him, but it certainly was hinted at, and the hint rejected without a moment's hesitation; his

constitution being then far too debilitated to allow him to entertain the idea of a residence in a hot climate.

So often as the opportunity presented itself did Mr. Huskisson endeavour to impress upon the Government the wisdom of reducing the amount of Unfunded Debt in the hands of the Bank. Of the necessity of this he appears to have been long sensible; but, in the latter years of his life, he became even more alive to the importance of some arrangement, by which the evil might be alleviated. Accordingly, in this, as in the preceding and following session, we find him thus referring to his recorded opinions on this subject : —“ My right honourable friends know that I have long entertained and pressed, and I will continue to press, the expediency and importance —with a view to the best interests of the country, and the ultimate safety of its credit—of the reduction of the amount of unfunded debt in the hands of the Bank, in order to have our funds more at our own disposal.”

Two other valuable Speeches, made this session, will be found in this collection. In one may be discovered, mixed up with many other important topics, the views which Mr. Huskisson entertained of the benefits to be derived from an extended application of the principles of Colonization and Emigration; while in the other, he urged the reduction of the duties on Sugar, and the advantages which might result from rendering this

country the entrepôt of the sugar of the world, and thus giving employment to its capital and operatives in refining sugar for the markets of Europe.

One of the great and favourite objects of his commercial policy, and one which he never lost sight of, was the promotion of every measure which might be calculated to make England the great entrepôt of the world. It was with this view that he had shewn himself so desirous that foreign copper ores might be allowed to be smelted in England, for the purposes of exportation—a permission which was vehemently opposed by the proprietors of mines in this country. The quantity and richness of the South-American ores, with which ours could in nowise compete, and the facilities which were offered for their transport, in the convenient shape of ballast for our vessels employed in the cotton trade, had not escaped his observation ; and he feared that if we neglected to avail ourselves of the present opening, capital might be found for forming establishments for the purpose of smelting these ores on the coast of South America, or that some more enterprising nation might rob us of the advantages which he foresaw might be drawn from their being brought as a raw commodity to this country, to be again exported in a more advanced stage of refinement.

The session had nearly drawn to a conclusion, when the gloomy aspect of our foreign relations and of our foreign policy, caused a slight inter-

ruption to the monotonous strains of honied compliment, which had accompanied and followed one great act of justice and prudence in our domestic policy. Sir James Mackintosh called the attention of Parliament to the extraordinary attack which had been made by an English ship of war off Terceira, upon some vessels having on board a body of unarmed Portuguese, in the beginning of the present year. On this occasion, although Mr. Peel signified the intention of Government to grant the papers called for, the conduct of ministers was sharply commented upon, not only by Mr. Huskisson, but also by Mr. Brougham, and still more by Lord Palmerston ; whose speech may be deservedly classed among the most brilliant specimens of parliamentary eloquence. With this single demonstration of disapprobation, the campaign terminated, and about the end of June both Houses were prorogued.

In the month of August, Mr. Huskisson paid a visit to his constituents at Liverpool. It was the first time he had met them as a private individual ; and although no longer arrayed in the dignities and influence which high office confers,—although the moment was one in which the industry and commerce of this country, in common with those of the whole world, were labouring under considerable depression,—his reception was as honourable to the good taste and feeling of the commercial community of that great port, as it was gratifying to himself. On general

politics, indeed, he met his constituents as he had always done. He had acted on the Catholic Relief Bill, as all who knew him were confident he would act. He had no inconsistency to explain, no apostacy to apologize for; and out of office, as in, his talents were equally devoted to the service of his country. Far from losing ground in the favour of his constituents, each visit which he paid to them strengthened their confidence in his abilities, and their attachment to his person, by bringing under their immediate observation his intelligence, capacity for business, and those natural and unobtrusive virtues of his private character, which constituted the charm of his society, and always rendered him the more popular and the more beloved wherever he was most known.

On entering the Exchange he was received with a warm and cordial welcome, and "one cheer more" was loudly called for and given as he concluded the following short address:—

"Gentlemen:—Allow me to offer you my most cordial and grateful thanks for this very kind and flattering reception. The honour of being thus noticed and distinguished by you, at this time, is to me the more gratifying from being unexpected—unexpected, because my present visit to my friends at Liverpool is not on any public occasion, or with reference to any public event: neither am I here in any public character. I am here, not to solicit further favours, but to make my personal acknowledgments—too tardily, perhaps—for those which I have already received at your hands. I am here as a private individual, a member of parliament, one of your members, it is true; and, as

such, justly proud of the high honour of representing this great and enlightened community ; as such, solicitously courting, as it has at all times been my duty and inclination to do, the most extensive and unreserved intercourse with my constituents, upon all matters of public interest ; more especially those by which your useful occupations and honourable pursuits are interwoven and identified with the general concerns and welfare of this great country. In this my individual capacity, I am ready, Gentlemen, to obey your commands upon all points of local interest. I am anxious to receive from you suggestions upon those of a more general nature. The latter shall be considered by me with the most careful attention, and with the most studious desire to forward the views and wishes upon which they may be founded. I have heard, with great concern, that the present period is one, in which the business carried on within these walls is rather to be marked by the extent of the transactions, than by the amount of the profit which they afford. I regret this state of things. I hope and believe, that it will not be of long duration ; but, whilst it exists, it affords an additional reason for my seeking among you any information, which your practical knowledge and experience may enable you to bestow, with a view to such relief (if any there be within the reach of Parliament) as may tend to mitigate the pressure, or to abridge the term, of the difficulties under which the industry and commerce of the country now labour."

On the Corn Exchange, he briefly alluded to the peculiar difficulties which surrounded the trade in foreign corn, and expressed his regret for the many elements of hazard and uncertainty to which it was exposed :—

" Fortunately," he continued, " the trade with Ireland,

formerly subjected to embarrassing restraints, is now entirely and permanently free. This beneficial change we owe to the progress of more correct views, and more liberal feelings, in respect to commerce; and the result has been most advantageous to both countries, as is well known and felt by every man, more especially in this part of the kingdom. But legislation, in regard to the trade in foreign corn, is attended with infinitely more of difficulty and complication. I will not say that the present law is the best that might be devised; but, under all the circumstances of the country, it was the best that could be attained,—preserving a due regard, not only to the interests of the different classes of the community, but to the conflicting passions, which are always excited by a discussion of the corn laws. I did not shrink from doing my duty when that discussion was pending. In so doing I have incurred the ill-will of some, and the enmity of others; but I earnestly hope that the present law may be allowed a full and a fair trial; by which we shall best be able to ascertain, when it has stood the test of the different vicissitudes to which the supply of corn is liable, whether it answers its purpose, or in what parts it requires amendment.”*

* It would seem impossible to describe the reasons for a change in the policy of our Corn Laws more forcibly than in the following words; which are admitted to be borrowed from a recent number of *The Quarterly Review*, without regard to the general purport of the article—

“ If we take the case of a country possessing superior facilities for the production of manufactures, such as rich coal and iron mines, with the necessary ingenuity and skill, it will be directly for the interest of its inhabitants to export manufactures in exchange for food, because upon the imported food the population may be maintained, while employing itself in producing a fresh supply of manufactures. If such a country were to restrict the importation of food, it would misdirect the employment of its own labour and capital, and check its own advancement in wealth, since its population cannot subsist

After remaining about ten days at Liverpool, Mr. Huskisson proceeded to pay a short visit to Mr. Heywood,* of Claremont, near Manchester; a gentleman to whom he was personally unknown, but who had expressed a strong wish that he would not quit the neighbourhood, without ascertaining, by personal inquiry and inspection, the actual state of trade at Manchester and the adjoining districts. Always anxious to obtain information, Mr. Huskisson availed himself with pleasure of this opportunity of making the acquaintance of Mr. Heywood, and of visiting some of the most important manufacturing establishments in Manchester, and shewed himself particularly attentive to, and interested in tracing, the various operations through which the silk passes, in the celebrated silk mills and manufactories of Mr. Vernon Royle, and of the Messrs. Tootal. He then visited the Exchange. As an attempt was made at the time (which has been recently renewed) to insinuate, that he expressed himself there in terms which justified a suspicion, that he

upon cutlery and cottons while they are raising corn and other articles of future subsistence; whereas, by exchanging their cottons and cutlery with foreigners for the means of subsistence, they can go on to produce more."

* The high estimation in which the character and talents of this gentleman are held in the county in which he resides, is sufficiently proved by his having been, while these sheets are yet in the press, elected member for Lancashire. It was at his hospitable board that Mr. Huskisson met for the first time the Rev. Mr. Blackburne,—an acquaintance renewed the following year, under such awful circumstances.

was wavering in his commercial policy, and beginning to conciliate the country party,—we will here insert an account of his reception, and also the report of his Speech, as they appeared in a Manchester paper of the day. From the latter, every candid person will see how perfectly unfounded, how utterly unjust, was any such interpretation of his expressions:—

On Thursday morning, it became pretty generally known that Mr. Huskisson would visit the Exchange; and accordingly, soon after half-past twelve at noon, accompanied by Mrs. Huskisson, by Joseph Birch, Esq. M. P. for Nottingham, his son, Mr. Thomas Birch, and Miss Birch, and by his host, Benjamin Heywood, Esq., Mr. Huskisson entered the Exchange. The room was very full, and Mr. Huskisson and his party walked to the centre, where a ring was almost immediately formed around them. Mr. Huskisson was received in a very gratifying manner, the gentlemen present uncovered; the applause, though not enthusiastic, appeared to be pretty general; and, so far as we could perceive, or have heard, it was unaccompanied by a single expression of disapprobation, during the whole time the right honourable gentleman remained in the room. Mr. Huskisson, finding that it was expected he would address his auditors, then spoke to the following effect:—

“ Gentlemen,—I am not about to detain you by any studied assurance of the sense which I entertain of this flattering reception. Were I to attempt to express my feelings on the occasion, I should certainly fail. But to make the attempt would be superfluous, because, from your knowledge of human nature, you will easily believe, that to be thus honoured and received, must be highly

gratifying to any man who has shared in the councils of his country, and taken an active part in public life ; and that this gratification must be still stronger if it devolves upon him, when, like myself, no longer in a public station, and when malevolence itself cannot ascribe any unworthy motive to the kindness which I now experience at your hands. It is a kindness which I the more gratefully acknowledge, as I am personally a stranger to almost every gentleman present, and have no connection, political or otherwise, with this great community.

“ I am well aware, Gentlemen, that I am now in the capital, as it were, of the industry, the ingenuity, and the wealth of this great manufacturing district. Neither do I forget, in coming among you at this time, that it has fallen to my lot to be the official organ of the King's Government, in bringing forward important measures of commercial policy, in which, however, I had the entire concurrence and cordial support of my then colleagues in the administration. Respecting the expediency of some of those measures a difference of opinion may, and I know does, exist. I am at all times ready to pay attention to the statements and arguments of those who take a different view from myself, and to profit by their experience and practical knowledge ; neither shall I hesitate to concur in any modification of those measures which circumstances may render desirable, or be ashamed of retracting any opinion which I have maintained, from the moment I am convinced that it is founded in error. This is the legitimate result of impartial discussion. But there is another class of opponents, who have recourse to the less fair, and less honourable weapons of scurrility and personal abuse—a mode of warfare, levelled not against the measures, but against the individual. To them I can concede nothing. They will never deter me from doing what I hold to be right, nor receive at my hands that consideration which I am always

anxious to give to opinions, candidly and honestly opposed to my own. I say this the rather, Gentlemen, because I know that your pursuits, at this moment, are less prosperous than I could wish ; and that, in many branches of industry, the remuneration of capital is not in its customary or fair proportion to the extent of your dealings. By what concurrence of causes this state of things has been produced, whether they are beyond our control, or how far they can be reached and mitigated by legislative interference, are questions far too extensive for the present occasion. I can only say, that if it can be shown to me that relief is within the power of Parliament, and that it can be safely applied, any suggestion, having this object in view, will be entitled to the most favourable consideration, and that my cordial support will be given to any measure likely, in my judgment, to conduce to that end.

“ I have told you, Gentlemen, that I am a stranger to your town. But, in making that remark, I did not forget the political connection by which I am bound to the interests of another great and neighbouring community ; I did not forget that those interests, in all essential points, are closely identified with your own. Let me add, that the commercial enterprize of Liverpool, and the manufacturing industry of Manchester, are not less identified with the interests of the whole kingdom ; that the landed interest, the first and greatest of all, owes much of its wealth to your exertions, and must, not less than the State itself, rely for the continuance of its prosperity, on the prosperity of the commercial and manufacturing classes of the community. This is a truth which, I trust, the great land-owners of this country will not be backward to acknowledge, which it will be, as it has been, my duty to inculcate in my place in the House of Commons, and of which Lancashire will always furnish the most striking proof and illustration.

“Gentlemen, I am sorry to have detained you, more at length than I intended, from your important avocations. Again thanking you for the flattering manner in which you have been pleased to receive me, let me conclude with my most sincere wish, that your pursuits may speedily be characterized, not perhaps by that buoyant expansion and those dazzling prospects by which you have been sometimes elated, but rather by a steady and progressive growth, and a more moderate, but more safe and equable state of prosperity.”

In some comments upon this speech, it was asserted, that Mr. Huskisson, “instead of manfully defending his policy from the attacks of his opponents, exposing their weakness and displaying his own strength, and boldly prognosticating the final triumph of his principles, expressed himself in terms which led not a few of his hearers to believe that his principles were about to undergo a material change.”

But why, as was shrewdly remarked, should Mr. Huskisson have so spoken as it was charged against him that he did not? *Cui bono*? Why should he have “manfully defended his policy,” where it had never been attacked, or display the conscious weakness of obtruding an apology in the absence of all tendency to accusation? From the reception Mr. Huskisson experienced, he must have felt that he was amongst friends. He knew that the eminent and intelligent merchants with whom he had been in immediate contact, wanted neither an exposition of his doctrines, nor arguments in their support, nor any assurance that he

was not about to abandon them. He heard nothing of any body who did ; and he could not answer objections where none were made. Mr. Huskisson limited the contingency of a modification of his opinions, to the previous establishment of a conviction in his mind, that they were founded in error. But did he throw out even the slightest hint of a suspicion that they were so ? No such thing. And he was known to have declared, in private intercourse, that his visit to Manchester had convinced him the more strongly than ever of the propriety of the course he had adopted.

It had been previously agreed that Mr. Huskisson's present visit to Liverpool was to be considered as a private one, and that there should be no public meeting or dinner. He had therefore expressly stated, in accepting Mr. Heywood's invitation, his desire that his being in the neighbourhood of Manchester should attract as little public notice as possible. An intimation was nevertheless conveyed to him, that a strong wish existed, on the part of many of the most opulent and enlightened commercial inhabitants of Manchester, to give him the compliment of a public dinner ; but he pleaded his other engagements as an apology for declining this gratifying mark of their approbation.

Perhaps there never was a person who was by nature so averse from anything that savoured of personal ostentation, or who so instinctively recoiled from anything that might be misconstrued into a hunting after popular applause. Such,

however, was the impression which his visit had made upon the inhabitants, and so anxious were they to prove the respect which they entertained for his character, and their sense of the active interest which he had always manifested in the manufacturing prosperity of the country, that a deputation afterwards followed him to Castle Howard, in order to deliver an invitation, signed by many of the first inhabitants of Manchester, to attend a public dinner. The deputation arrived at Castle Howard about half-past eleven on Saturday morning, and had an immediate interview with Mr. Huskisson. They informed him, that the invitation then presented had not originated with any exclusive political party; that his personal friends in Manchester had thought it most delicate on their part to keep almost aloof from it; and that it was chiefly owing to the same feeling, that the individuals deputed to wait upon him, were not gentlemen with whom he had any previous acquaintance. Mr. Huskisson, with considerable emotion, replied, that he felt himself quite unable to express the high gratification which that invitation, so numerous and so respectably signed, afforded him. He said that he had, as a public man, faithfully and laboriously sought to promote the welfare of the country; but he had done no more than he believed any other man in his situation would have done: that, notwithstanding the clamour and misrepresentation which prevailed in certain quar-

ters, he was quite confident that posterity would do justice to the measures he had advocated. From his heart he thanked the gentlemen by whom the invitation was signed; and he deeply regretted, that his time and engagements would not allow of his accepting it.

As the season for the re-assembling of Parliament approached, an impression appeared to be very generally gaining ground, that the new session would not pass off so quietly as the last had done. Distress was becoming very prevalent in all parts of the country, but more particularly in the agricultural districts, and the country gentlemen loudly declared their dissatisfaction. To such as still took an interest in foreign politics, and looked beyond the seas which wash our shores, the prospect was far from being calculated to gratify national pride. They beheld England fallen from her high and palmy state, no longer regarded as the arbitress of Europe, but the willing instrument of Austrian policy, coldly circumscribing the boundaries of regenerated Greece, while the Russian eagle soared proudly over the ruins of the Ottoman empire. They saw her influence extinct in Portugal, and her remonstrances insolently set at nought by a perjured Usurper;—they heard the execrations of France, which attributed to English interference the scourge of an odious and unpopular Administration;—and all care, all interest for the infant States of the new world, seemed obliterated from

the minds of the British Ministry, as unworthy of their notice or attention. Great as had been the applause showered down upon the conduct of the Duke of Wellington in respect to the Catholics, people began to think that a single act of justice, however splendid, had been amply repaid by the forbearance which had been extended towards his Government during a whole session ; and the recent *ex officio* informations cast a shade around the Minister, which even the recollection of all the glories of Waterloo failed to dissipate. It was prophesied—and such prophesies work their own accomplishment—that the Duke of Wellington must prepare himself for some severe opposition ; and it was particularly observed of Mr. Huskisson, that if he wished to support the high opinion which the country entertained of him, he must assume a leading part in the business of Parliament, and prove the falsehood of the rumours which accused him of coquetting for a re-admission to the Duke's Government, by a strict, candid, uncompromising scrutiny of all its measures.

Parliament was about to meet under circumstances of peculiar difficulty. During the three last sessions, with the exception of the Catholic Relief Bill, small progress had been made in any measures for the relief, or improvement, of the country. In that of 1827, first the illness of Lord Liverpool, and then the delays attendant on the formation of a new Government, had occupied the greater portion of the session ;—the following year

had been consumed, in a great measure, with like difficulties and delays, and in the last, everything had given way to, and been overlooked in, the settlement of the Catholic Question. The public began to demand greater proofs of an efficient Administration, and to manifest strong symptoms of disquietude and dissatisfaction. Both Houses assembled on the 4th of February, and the language held by the partizans of Ministers was still that of confident security. They evidently calculated their strength on the improbability of a cordial union between the different parties, into which the Opposition was split; and on the divisions of their opponents they built their best hopes of riding out the storm which was gathering around them. This security received a staggering blow on the first night's debate on the Address, when the Government reeled to its centre, and might have been overthrown, had it not been for the unexpected assistance of that party, which, to borrow a phrase from our neighbours, we must term "the extreme left." This party went over in a body to their support; and by this unaccountable manœuvre the Amendment was negatived, and the original Address carried by a very small majority. On this occasion, Mr. Huskisson both voted and spoke in favour of the Amendment; but, faithful to his recorded opinions, and keenly alive to the danger of misconception or misrepresentation, on points on which many of the principal supporters of the Amendment were known to entertain views and

tenets totally irreconcilable with his own, he distinctly stated the grounds upon which his support was given, "in order to guard against the possibility of its being supposed, that he was not most anxious to protect the country from the evils which must ensue from any fresh attempt to alter the currency." He alluded generally to the unsatisfactory state of our foreign policy, and made some severe remarks upon the conduct of Ministers, in permitting the predatory warfare which was carried on against Mexico, from the ports of Cuba ; which he described as inconsistent with the revival of industry in Mexico, and the other states formerly belonging to the Crown of Spain,—with the interests of commerce and navigation,—and as hostile to the proper management of the mines of those countries, which it was our great interest to make as productive as possible.

The events of this session are so fresh in the recollection of all, that it would be useless to recapitulate them, or to dwell at length on the share which Mr. Huskisson took in them. His name will be found frequently occurring in discussions of general interest and importance, and it became very obvious that his long experience and unrivalled abilities for business were giving to him a greater weight and importance in Parliament, than he had ever before possessed. Whilst, out of doors, his accession to office was regarded by a very large and enlightened part of the public as essential to the interests of the country.

Nominated a member of the East-India Committee, he devoted himself assiduously to acquire, from the best sources, a correct and intimate knowledge of the extent and regulations of the various branches of commercial intercourse included in the Company's Charter. The interest which he was known to feel on this important topic, and the reputation which he enjoyed as the great champion of all improvement, and as the advocate for a liberal and comprehensive system of national and commercial policy, procured for him the most unreserved communications from all those who looked forwards to a relaxation in our Trade with the East; and these advantages, joined to the clearness of his intellect, and the aptitude of his interrogatories, enabled him to draw from witnesses, evidently reluctant, the most important admissions. It was in the management of an investigation like this, that Mr. Huskisson was, perhaps, unequalled, and vindicated the proud eulogium bestowed on him by Mr. Canning. Quick-sighted and perspicuous in his views, his mind was never diverted from its object, and he speedily detected the fallacies, and swept away the web in which it was frequently attempted to entangle the question; whilst the temper and quietness with which he conducted his examinations, offered no grounds of complaint, even to the most adverse witnesses.

Although the principal part of the enquiry of this session was directed to the particular con-

sideration of the China Trade, yet it was well understood, that his views with regard to our Indian Empire were of the most enlarged nature, and embraced not only improvements in the Commercial, but such changes in the Financial and Agricultural systems, as well as in the administration of civil and criminal Justice, as must ultimately tend to a material amelioration in the condition of the inhabitants of those distant possessions. He had long observed with regret the slow progress which was made in the cultivation of some of the great staple commodities of India. It was only very lately that any care or attention had been paid to the quality of their raw silk, and he was often known to point out, and dwell upon, a singular circumstance which had occurred in the course of this year, in the importation of a cargo of raw Cotton from New South Wales, where the cultivation of that article had only been recently introduced, which was of a quality infinitely superior to any that had ever been brought from the East-Indies, where it had long formed the principal, indeed nearly the only manufacture of the country. When it is considered that about forty years ago the production of Indigo in the East Indies was entirely in the hands of the natives; that the article then produced was inferior, and the trade inconsiderable; and when it is known that, since British subjects have been allowed to cultivate it, its growth in other countries is nearly super-

seded, and that British India supplies the markets of the world ; there is surely to be found, in this circumstance alone, sufficient reason to hope that were British capital and skill permitted to be employed in the cultivation of the other productions of India, similar important results may be obtained.

Deaf to the admonitions of reason and experience, and obstinately blind to the change which had taken place in the feelings of the public, since the East Retford question was first discussed in 1828, as well as to the increasing interest with which the subject was now regarded by all descriptions of people, Ministers determined to persevere in the course which they had so imprudently adopted, and to use the utmost influence of Government in rejecting any alteration in their plan. But the signs of the times were not lost upon a mind like that of Mr. Huskisson. Every thing which had occurred since the question had been last agitated, —every thing which was passing around him,—every thing in the condition of the country—convinced him, that the circumstances of the moment demanded a greater measure of severity towards this case of notorious and flagrant corruption, than a mere extension of the franchise to the adjoining hundred.

Accordingly, when the Disfranchisement bill was once more brought forward, Mr. Huskisson again raised his warning voice, and emphatically urged the wisdom and justice of transferring

the elective franchise to Birmingham. Again he pointed out the immense importance of this measure, in reference to the general question of Reform, and avowed his conviction, that it was of the utmost consequence to deal with the present case, so as best to guard against the growing danger of sweeping reform, on principles too abstract and general. This he declared to be his sincere and deliberate belief; and he, therefore, called upon those who thought with him to take up this defensive position against the difficulties and attacks which would soon press upon them from all quarters. If driven from it by the rejection of the present amendment, he must then, however reluctantly, retire upon another, also defensive. As to the plan of throwing the franchise into the hundred of Bassetlaw, he justly regarded it as a mere mockery of reform, and as utterly inadequate, either as a measure of punishment, or as a demonstration of the readiness of Parliament to meet the reasonable wishes of the people.

He then proceeded to instance the successive concessions which had latterly been wrung from Government in favour of liberty, of intelligence, of commerce, and of general improvement; but, whilst he declared the satisfaction which he felt at these concessions, he asked, "if it were creditable to, or consistent with, the character of the Legislature of the country, that it should always appear to grant such concessions only at the moment when prudence and necessity compelled it

to withhold them no longer." Notwithstanding all the exertions of Government, the amendment for transferring the right of election to Birmingham was only defeated by a very trifling majority. This effort to commence a moderate and reasonable Reform having failed, Mr. Huskisson, who was deeply sensible of the danger resulting from this continued resistance to the wishes of the public, next supported a motion of Lord John Russell's for giving representatives to Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham,—a measure which he enforced by the most powerful arguments, and stated, that the time was fast approaching when, if it were now rejected, Ministers would be obliged themselves to propose such a step, as necessary for the safety and salvation of the country.

That time has arrived more suddenly than, perhaps, even his judgment anticipated; and it is impossible not to attribute the rapid strides with which it has latterly advanced, to that short-sighted and pertinacious resistance, which refused to entertain any proposal, having for its object even the most temperate measure of reform. It is now too late to offer conjectures on what might have been the effect of an opposite course. It is too late to inquire whether, if a fair and honest disposition had been evinced to meet the wishes of the People, by seizing every opportunity, in which a borough had been convicted of flagrant and notorious corruption, to disfranchise such corrupt borough, the demonstration of such a disposition

on the part of the Legislature, might not have been accepted by the nation as such an earnest of good intentions, as might have been the means, if not of averting the shock of a more sweeping reform, at least of diminishing its force when it should come. But it is clear that this repeated opposition to every project of Reform, whilst it inflamed the passions of the people, and destroyed or weakened their confidence in the Legislature, has forced many whose views on the question were originally the most moderate, to admit the necessity, and advocate the adoption, of a measure much more comprehensive than they, probably, ever dreamt of. The support which Mr. Huskisson gave to the motion of Lord John Russell, on this occasion, is of itself a convincing proof of the justice of this remark; and it may be that, had his life been spared, he too would have felt the wisdom, and admitted the necessity, of a more extensive alteration in our Parliamentary Representation, than, under different circumstances, he ever appears to have contemplated.

The apathy, unprecedented in our history, with which the Foreign relations of the country had been so long regarded, at length began to disappear under the general condemnation which the conduct of Ministers experienced, not only at home, but from all the enlightened portion of Europe. The total departure from the line of continental policy which had been marked out by Mr. Canning, and the consequent downfall of

British influence, were severely reprobated and deplored both by Mr. Huskisson and his friends, and by all the leading members of the Whig opposition. Still, a party, considerable in numbers at least, existed in the House of Commons, which, occupied wholly with domestic embarrassments, seemed to disregard everything that passed beyond the shores of their own island, and which heard with impatience, and viewed with apprehension or indifference, any subject which they did not consider as purely English.

It was, perhaps, owing to this, that, although the two speeches made by Mr. Huskisson, on Lord Palmerston's motion respecting Portugal, and on that of Mr. Grant respecting the Attack off Terceira, were distinguished by careful research, powerful argument, and an intimate knowledge of international law,—although they aimed at a higher style of eloquence than he was usually accustomed to employ,—they did not, nevertheless, produce that visible impression on the House, which commonly attended his greater efforts. They were listened to with deep attention; but they did not call forth the same triumphant cheers with which his expositions of our financial or commercial policy had been so often received.

Independent, however, of the determined coldness which the country party exhibited on these questions, there were other considerations which were plainly calculated to diminish the effect of any eloquence exerted upon them. From various cir-

cumstances, a long interval had been suffered to elapse since the occurrences in Portugal and the attack off Terceira, had originally been before the public, and this interval had destroyed the freshness of their character, and mitigated the burst of indignation which they had at first excited; while the state of the different parties, opposed to the Duke of Wellington's administration, was such as tended essentially to weaken, if not to destroy, for a considerable period of the session, all chances of a combined attack, or cordial co-operation. The division on the first night's debate could not be easily forgotten; any more than the repeated declarations, on the part of some of the leaders of the Whigs, most influential both in rank and character, of their hopes and confidence in the existing Government. On the Opposition side of the House, indeed, by far the most determined hostility towards their former friends was shown by the Ultra Tories; and it has been rumoured, that this hostility was so fierce, as to induce them to sound, whether any overtures on their part towards forming a coalition, would be met by Mr. Huskisson and his friends. It has even been said, that a very small concession on a single point, on the part of the latter, would have been received as sufficient; but that Mr. Huskisson wisely and honestly felt, that any junction between himself and those who had promulgated and maintained political tenets so subversive of all his measures, would be fatal to

his character with the world, and that he therefore resolutely refused even the slightest compromise.

Though devoting himself with infinite labour to his attendance on the East-India Committee, and though evidently suffering under symptoms of indisposition, Mr. Huskisson took an active part in most of the important debates of this session. His speeches relating to Mexico in particular, will be found full of valuable observations on the situation and prospects of that country, and on the probable views and policy of the United States towards her; and are doubly interesting, as marking the vigilant eye with which he regarded the conduct of England in her relations with that portion of the world; the importance of which has been too generally undervalued by the statesmen of Europe.

It is as impossible to particularize the various exertions which marked this last period of his Parliamentary career, as it has been difficult to make a selection from among them. Nearly all have therefore been preserved, and will be found in these volumes, and in each the careful reader will meet with some valuable fact, some convincing argument, or some statesmanlike view, to reward his patience. One of the most finished and successful speeches he ever made, was that delivered on Mr. Davenport's motion for an Inquiry into the causes of the Distress of the Nation, which, at the request of his friends, he afterwards revised for publication;—a task which he could

seldom be persuaded to undertake. The views stated in this Speech he enlarged upon in a subsequent debate on the subject of injudicious Taxation; when he declared his unalterable conviction, that the upholding of the present Corn Laws and of the present system of taxation, was incompatible with an increase of national prosperity, or with the preservation of national contentment; and expressed his opinion, that those laws might be repealed without affecting the landed interest, and at the same time the distress of the people be relieved. Of the precise nature of the alterations in our system of taxation which he contemplated, unfortunately, no traces are to be found among his papers; but there is his own authority for believing, that he was favourable to some modified Property Tax, by which the pressure on the productive classes of the community might be lessened; and to a general simplification of the machinery, which, while it increases the vexation, diminishes the net receipts of our present fiscal burthens.

In the early part of the session, Mr. Huskisson had signified his intention, if the subject were not taken up by some other member, of calling the attention of the House to the difference in the regulations enforced against Officers on half, and those in the receipt of full pay, holding other situations; and, at a later period, he gave notice that he should, before Parliament was dissolved, move for a Committee to inquire into the Banking system in

England. To this latter subject he devoted much study and consideration, and had collected much information and made many notes, with a view to bringing it forward ; but the slow progress which was made in public business, the interruption caused by the necessary absence of Sir Robert Peel, speedily followed by the commencement of a new reign, and his own subsequent illness, frustrated his intentions. It is sufficiently clear, however, that he considered an inquiry into the whole system of Banking as being essential, before any renewal was granted of the Charter of the Bank of England.

In pursuance of those opinions which he had so often advocated, and in conformity with the whole tenor of his public life, Mr. Huskisson gave a powerful and cordial support to the Bill brought forward by Mr. Robert Grant, for the removal of the various disabilities affecting persons of the Jewish persuasion. The charge of inconsistency having been alleged against him, for now recommending relief to the Jews, when, in 1828, he had objected to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, he recalled to the recollection of the House the motives which had influenced his conduct upon that occasion. He had not resisted that measure from any desire to exclude the Dissenters from a full participation in all political privileges, and he had rested his arguments against it, at that immediate point of time, specially upon the apprehension which he entertained,

in common with many others, that a partial concession to a particular class of people, might have a tendency to injure and retard that greater and more urgent act of justice to the Catholics, which had since been so happily accomplished. He instanced the conduct which France and the United Netherlands had wisely adopted towards the Jews, and expressed his earnest hope that, as their exclusion was the last exception remaining to the system of general toleration, which was now the principle of English law, this Bill might be allowed to pass, and thus form the consummation of that course of religious liberality, which would immortalize the history of the present Parliament.

Mr. Huskisson's name will also be found in the list of the minority who voted for repealing the punishment of death in cases of forgery. On this subject he was known to entertain considerable hesitation; but where so much doubt prevailed, even among those who had considered the question with the profoundest attention, he felt conscientiously that it became the duty of a legislator to give the benefit of that doubt to the side of mercy and humanity, and that the experiment of substituting a milder penalty deserved, at least, to be tried. He therefore supported the amendment moved by Sir James Mackintosh.

When, in the month of June, the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Resolutions respecting the Sugar duties, a most animated debate

ensued. Mr. Huskisson had, on a former occasion, expressed his conviction, that great as might be the pressure and the difficulties upon other interests in the country, there was none labouring under more difficulties, or requiring more urgently that relief should be given to it, than the West-India Interest. He now dissected and criticised the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a force and effect which carried confusion into the ranks of the Treasury; and he denounced the undecided and vacillating conduct which marked all the measures of Government, who "put forward laws, as they would an advanced guard, with instructions to fall back, or to wheel to the right or to the left, as occasion might require,"—a conduct which, by unsettling all commercial transactions, spread alarm and dissatisfaction throughout the country. The unpremeditated readiness with which Mr. Huskisson overthrew the propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the clearness and acuteness with which he exposed their fallacy, the force of his arguments, and the severity of his sarcasm, made an impression upon the House, almost unprecedented in matters of such dry detail. The Government had a majority in their favour; but this made but small amends for the mortification they sustained from the caustic denunciations of Mr. Huskisson, and the bitter taunts of Mr. Brougham; and they subsequently abandoned their original proposition.

The weakness of the Government was now every day becoming more evident. The forbearance of the Whigs was rapidly vanishing before repeated disappointments, and at the period of which we are now treating, a growing approximation was observable between them, and Mr. Huskisson and his adherents. These symptoms became still stronger, after the decease of his late Majesty; and the storm of war, which had for some time threatened the Ministry, burst forth in all its violence on the motion for an address to the new Sovereign; the debate on which was characterized by a warmth of language almost amounting to acrimony.

Little more remains of the Parliamentary history of Mr. Huskisson. As a small but immediate measure of relief to the crying distresses of the West-India proprietors, he proposed a reduction of the duties levied on Rum in Scotland and Ireland; but, on an assurance that the Government would be ready, at another time, to enter upon the question, and in consideration of the advanced state of the session, and the absence of many of the Irish members, he consented not to press his resolution to a division.

On the discussion on the Labourers' Wages Bill, he thus expressed himself on the Truck system:—"the system of paying in goods and not in money, has arisen from the exercise of power on the one side, over the necessity which existed on the other. The workman is obliged to submit, because he cannot obtain employment

on any other terms. The difficulty of the master is not caused by the want of a sufficient quantity of the circulating medium ; but the effect of this practice to the workman, has been to lower his wages twenty, and in some instances twenty-five per cent. This is a system which ought not to be allowed to continue : it must lead to discontent and dissatisfaction throughout the country."

We will confine ourselves to one more extract from the Speeches of this great statesman. It is from his speech on the Regency Question,—the last of any importance,—the last but one he ever made within the walls of that House, of which he was, for so many years, one of the brightest ornaments ; and no person, we think, can read it without being struck with its extraordinary application to the circumstances of his own approaching fate :—
" My honourable and learned friend * has well observed that, of all men living, the present Ministers, and the members of the present Parliament, should be the last to overlook the precariousness of human life. In one session of that Parliament, what solemn warnings did we not receive ! Look at Lord Liverpool. On the 16th of February, discharging an important duty in the House of Lords, in the full enjoyment of health and spirits, and vigour of life, the *mens sana in corpore sano*,—on the 17th, stricken to the earth, and lost for ever to his friends, to the administration of which he was

* Mr. Robert Grant, who had moved the Address.

the head, and to the country of which he enjoyed the confidence! * * * * The session closed on the 2d of July. In the beginning of August, Mr. Canning was still transacting public business; —on the 8th of that month he was numbered with the illustrious dead.”

Mr. Huskisson never spoke again in Parliament, except a few words, on the 13th of July, in answer to a complaint of Mr. Wilmot Horton's, that he had omitted, in his speech on the State of the Country, to advert to Emigration, as one essential mode of relief; to which observation Mr. Huskisson merely replied, that he had only addressed himself to measures of immediate relief, and that, though no enemy to emigration, it appeared to him to be a subject demanding great and serious consideration.

Such is a brief and hasty outline of Mr. Huskisson's Parliamentary history; and an outline is, unfortunately, all that can be offered of many even of his most important speeches. Indifferent to display, speaking frequently without the slightest preparation, rising late in the debate, and addressing himself to subjects the least attractive to all but those whose interests were involved, it is not to be wondered at, that many of his speeches should be imperfectly reported. In some few instances, however, manuscript notes have been found, which have been carefully made use of, in order to remedy, as far as was possible, these imperfections.

The Speeches which he was prevailed upon to publish, were subjected to a most careful revision ; but it was a task which he undertook with considerable reluctance. In composition, he was difficult in the selection of his words and in the arrangement of his sentences, and without, perhaps, carrying fastidiousness to the extent which Mr. Canning is reported to have done, it may still be fairly said, that he never spared the file. This, however, is only true as applied to Official Papers. In his common correspondence, his style was strongly indicative of his character—simple, easy, and natural.

For some time past, his physical system had evidently been suffering under a degree of languor and debility, which required care and rest, and showed itself by no means equal to the heavy demands made upon it, by the incessant activity of his mental powers. Influenced by the recollection of past favours, and by the feelings of gratitude which he always bore towards his late Majesty, for the kindness and confidence with which he had treated him whilst a servant of the Crown, and unmindful of the inadequacy of his strength to any considerable fatigue or excitement, Mr. Huskisson determined to pay the last mark of respectful duty, by attending the funeral ceremony. For this purpose, he left town on the 14th of July, for Sir George Warrender's, at Cliefden, and on the following evening

proceeded from thence to Windsor. The procession had scarcely begun to move from St. George's Hall, when he felt himself ill ; but, as it was then impossible to withdraw, he continued, during the whole of the long ceremony, in a state of great suffering. As soon as he could leave the Chapel, he returned to Cliefden, where he remained seriously ill the whole of the following day. On Saturday, he was sufficiently relieved to be removed to London ; where he underwent an operation, which was most skilfully performed by Mr. Copeland, but which confined him to his room for a fortnight, and greatly reduced him.

On the 12th of July, he had received the following requisition from Liverpool :

“ Sir,

“ His Majesty having, by his royal Message, intimated his intention of speedily dissolving the present Parliament and calling a new one ; we, the undersigned freemen and other inhabitants of Liverpool, again seek the assurance of your willingness to be put in nomination to represent this borough.

“ We gratefully acknowledge the particular and effective care which our local interests have ever received from you ; and, on having your permission, we pledge ourselves to use our utmost exertions to maintain a connection, which hitherto has been to us so acceptable and gratifying.”

Never, within the annals of that borough, had a requisition so numerous and respectably signed been sent to a Candidate, combining as it did the

names of individuals of every political sentiment, and whose commercial interests were equally various and conflicting. Notwithstanding the laborious duties attending a popular election, Mr. Huskisson could not but look forward with pride and exultation to the period, when he was again to present himself as a candidate for the second commercial port in the kingdom—not invested with the dignity of a Minister, or backed by the influence of the Government, but relying on the recollection of the faithful zeal and attention, with which he had discharged his duties towards his constituents. This high gratification was denied him; as his medical attendants pronounced him to be utterly incapable of undertaking so long a journey, or of encountering the fatigues of an election, and peremptorily forbade the attempt. Mr. Huskisson was therefore constrained to yield, however reluctantly, to their commands. To all the former proofs of regard and admiration, which the inhabitants of Liverpool had already, at different times, conferred upon him, they now added that of re-electing him, without his appearing on the hustings.

Parliament was dissolved on the 23d of July, after a long and arduous session, in which nothing had been accomplished, and in which the vacillating conduct of the Ministers had exposed them to the bitterest reproaches. A great party in the country looked forward with earnest hope for a cordial junction between the Whigs and Mr. Hus-

kissoon ; and it was known that, at a meeting of the former, such a step had been discussed, and, after some hesitation, postponed. The demonstrations of public opinion were most encouraging to the opponents of Government. In almost every place where the election was popular, Ministers either shrunk from a trial, or were beaten.

But, beyond the excitement which he felt in the results of the new elections, Mr. Huskisson's interest was warmly raised by the extraordinary events which, in the last days of July, precipitated from the Throne the elder branch of the Bourbons. As a firm and consistent friend to civil and religious liberty, he could not but admit, that this change was justified by the bigoted and unconstitutional conduct which had provoked it ; and when his mind recurred to the scenes of his early youth, to the dreadful excesses which had then disgusted the friends of liberty, and cast a temporary cloud over the doctrines of reform, he found in the magnanimous moderation displayed by the French nation, even in the first ebullitions of victory,—a moderation which has wrung from those least disposed to view their conduct with a favourable eye, the admission, that “ the French deserve almost all the eulogiums which they have bestowed upon themselves,”—reasonable grounds for hoping, that the time was at length arrived, when France was to enjoy all the advantages and all the blessings, which spring from a free constitutional monarchy. That those hopes may not

be again doomed to disappointment,—that the great moral lesson which this revolution has given to the world may not be thrown away, either upon the people or their rulers,—must be the ardent wish of all who believe that in a limited and well-balanced Government consist the best securities for the improvement and happiness of nations.

Although the operation which he had undergone had been pronounced completely successful, Mr. Huskisson's convalescence was so exceedingly slow, that his medical advisers became anxious that he should try the effect of sea air towards the recovery of his strength ; and an opportunity of doing so presented itself, which overcame the habitual dislike entertained by him towards a residence at a watering place. Lord Anglesey had pressed him warmly to visit him at Cowes ;—an invitation which Mr. Huskisson accepted with pleasure, not only as affording him the means of enjoying the sea air without fatigue, by frequent excursions on the water, but because he entertained towards Lord Anglesey strong feelings of private and public attachment, for the many proofs of considerate regard and manly support received from him, from the first period of their political connexion down to the present moment.

After a week's stay with the noble Marquis, Mr. Huskisson proceeded to Earham, where he remained till the beginning of September ; when he sat out on his ill-fated journey to Liverpool, in

order to be present at the opening of the new Railway to Manchester, which was to be celebrated with great magnificence and rejoicings, and which ceremony he had long promised to attend.

Those who saw Mr. Huskisson after his return from the Isle of Wight, describe him as looking better than he had previously done, and he himself appeared sensible of some improvement in his health; but he was still very deficient in strength, and had gained but little ground in that respect. On the 1st of September, he made an effort to go out with his gun, but came back in the course of an hour, complaining much of fatigue and languor, and oppressed with a nervous feeling, that he should never again recover his wonted strength for the purposes of exertion and exercise. He was haunted, moreover, with the prepossession, that he should prove unequal to all he wished and all he should be called upon, to undertake at Liverpool. Yet he was so much indebted to the indulgence which had excused his absence at the late election, and to the kindness then manifested towards him, that nothing short of positive inability could be admitted to interfere with the performance of his present engagement.

Under these discouraging circumstances, he and Mrs. Huskisson left Eartham on the 4th; and, after paying two short visits at Mr. Sturges Bourne's and Mr. Littleton's, merely as resting-places, they reached Lord Stafford's at Trentham,

on the 8th of September. Here they were received with undiminished kindness by his long tried and valued friends; but the gratification which Mr. Huskisson always felt in their society was interrupted by indisposition, which confined him to his room during the greater part of the only day which he was enabled to remain with them. On the 10th, he and Mrs. Huskisson arrived at Sir John Tobin's, near Liverpool, where a large party of his friends was assembled to meet them.

As the period of his intended stay at Liverpool was limited by other arrangements, every day was fully occupied, either by public business, or in inspecting the various improvements which had been made in the Docks, and other great establishments, since his last visit. To Mrs. Huskisson—who had never been at Liverpool before—every thing was new; and he was anxious that she should avail herself of this occasion, to see as much as possible of this great emporium of British enterprise. In pursuance of this object, the morning of Monday was partly occupied in viewing the magnificent docks and quays upon the Mersey. On landing from the steam boat, Mr. Huskisson was called away to attend some engagements in the town, and could not, by this means, accompany Mrs. Huskisson to the public Cemetery. It is remarkable, that he should have been known, on several occasions, to express himself in terms of the strongest admiration of the taste and liberality

which had planned and completed this spot, and that he should have pressed Mrs. Huskisson (who was already fatigued with the previous excursion of the morning) to visit it, with unusual earnestness.

On the morning of the 14th, he went to the Exchange, accompanied by Mr. Bolton, Sir John Tobin, and many of his friends, where a vast multitude, in addition to the gentlemen who usually attend about that time, had assembled, to hail his arrival once more, after the disappointment they had experienced by his non-attendance during the late election. The large room was crowded to excess.

If there were any who supposed that Mr. Huskisson had, in consequence of his secession from the toils of public life, lost any of his popularity amongst his constituents, they would, could they have been there to witness the enthusiasm with which he was received, have seen abundant proof of the fallacy of such an opinion. He was never more warmly greeted; and there never was a period when his observations were listened to with a deeper interest. After he had passed through the room, amidst the most enthusiastic cheers, he addressed the assembled multitude to the following effect:—

“ As I perceive among those who have honoured me with this very flattering reception, many who are my immediate constituents, and as I trust that you will allow me

to consider myself as the representative of all the collective interests of this great community, without distinction between those who honour me with their support, and those who are opposed to me, or between those who have votes and those who have not, in the election of the members who are returned by this town to Parliament, my first anxiety in meeting you to-day was to express my regret that I was not able to be present, when it was so much my wish to have been here, at the late election. Gentlemen, I was about to offer you some apology for my involuntary absence; but if I had anything suitable and appropriate to offer on the occasion, I fairly own that your kindness has driven it out of my head. But the very reception which has superseded any explanation which I might have wished to offer, has more strongly impressed upon my heart those feelings of gratitude which are so pre-eminently due for your indulgence on the late occasion—almost the first, I believe, in modern times—in which a member for Liverpool has been restored to the confidence of his constituents, without making his appearance among them at the hustings.

“ Gentlemen, this loyal town is about to receive the visit of a distinguished Individual of the highest station and influence in the affairs of this great country. I rejoice that he is coming among you. I am sure that what he has already seen in this county, and what he will see here, will not fail to make a great impression on his mind. After this visit, he will be better enabled to estimate the value and importance of Liverpool in the general scale of the great interests of this country. He will see what can be effected by patient and persevering industry, by enterprise, and good sense, unaided by monopoly or exclusive privileges, and in spite of their existence elsewhere. Gentlemen, he will, I hope, find that if you are not friendly to monopoly in other places, it is not because you require or

want it for yourselves. He will see that you know how to thrive and prosper without it; that all you expect from Government is encouragement, protection, facility, and freedom in your several pursuits and avocations, either of manufacturing industry or commerce.

“ Gentlemen, I have heard, with just satisfaction, and from many concurrent quarters, that every thing connected with these interests is in a more healthy and promising state than it was last year. I rejoice at the change for the better. I hope and believe it will be permanent. But do not let us be supine, and think that the energies under which difficulties are diminishing, may relieve us from the necessity of unremitting exertion. In foreign countries you have powerful rivals to encounter; and you can only hope to continue your superiority over them by incessantly labouring to lighten the pressure upon the industry of our own people, and by promoting every measure which is calculated to give increased vigour, fresh life, and greater facility to the powers which create, and to the hands which distribute, the almost boundless productions of this great country.

“ I trust, Gentlemen, that, by a steady adherence to these views and principles, I shall most faithfully represent your wishes and feelings in parliament. So long as we are in unison upon these points, I shall be most happy and proud to continue to be your representative, under the sanction of your confidence, and so long as health and strength shall be vouchsafed to me to fulfil the duties of the station which I now hold, as one of your members in the House of Commons.

“ I am persuaded, Gentlemen, that by this course I shall best consult your prosperity; and I am still more immovably convinced, that whatever advances the general interests of this great mart of commerce, will best advance all the other great interests of the country; and first and

foremost, that interest which is the oldest and the greatest of all—the landed interest, upon which, as the example of this country so well demonstrates, industry and commerce have already conferred so many benefits.”

The conclusion of this speech was followed by nine times nine as hearty cheers as ever burst from the lips of a Liverpool assembly. Mr. Huskisson afterwards visited the Under-writers' Room, where he was as warmly received. He then left the building, and, as he passed through the crowd, shook hands with his numerous friends, on his way to the King's Arms.

After quitting the Exchange, he returned to Sir John Tobin's only in time to set out with Mrs. Huskisson for Wavertree Hall, in order to be in readiness to accompany Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence to the grand ceremony of the following day; Mr. Lawrence being Chairman of the Railway Committee. In passing the few miles which separate the two houses, Mrs. Huskisson found that Mr. Huskisson, though highly gratified with his reception, was much exhausted by the exertion of meeting and replying to all the marks of friendly attachment which had been heaped upon him, and she would not, in consequence, suffer him to enter into any details of the occurrences of the morning, further than to express his pride and gratitude for the cordiality and affection which he had universally experienced.

They reached Mr. Lawrence's to dinner. Every person was, of course, occupied with the all-

engrossing subject of the next day's business, in satisfaction at the now no longer doubtful success of which Mr. Huskisson warmly participated. He had, from the earliest period of this great mechanical undertaking, interested himself zealously in promoting its ultimate accomplishment; and though, as a Minister of the Crown, when the application had originally been made to Parliament, in 1825, he found himself precluded, according to Parliamentary usage, from taking a part in what is considered the private business of the House, he had nevertheless felt, that this application, though technically a private Petition, involved great public interests,—interests which it should be the especial duty of the Board of Trade, of which he was then President, to countenance and encourage. On this ground, he had declared that, far from considering it as inconsistent with his character of a Minister, he deemed it his bounden duty to give a strenuous support to the principle of the Bill on its second reading, though it was impossible for him to attend to its details in the committee.

It is well known that he regarded the result of this spirited private undertaking as fraught with important consequences to the Public, and the success of it as highly beneficial to the commerce of this country, in the struggle which it has to undergo in order to maintain a successful competition with foreign rivals. He was well aware that in this struggle all efforts must prove un-

availing, without the greatest economy, not of money only, but of time; and it was in this point of view that he predicted incalculable advantages from the employment of Railways.

Early the next morning, the party proceeded from Wavertree to the point where they were to join the grand procession. Notwithstanding the exertions which he had been called upon to make since his arrival at Liverpool, Mr. Huskisson's spirits had appeared to rise with the demand, and even the sense of fatigue and of bodily weakness yielded to the exhilarating effects of the anticipated triumph, and of the repeated marks of regard and approbation which he had met with from all ranks of his constituents. The just pride which he felt in having been sought out and selected to represent their interests in Parliament, was confirmed and increased every time that he beheld the growing prosperity of Liverpool—a prosperity, as he himself would often observe, not ascribable to an indulgence in monopolies, to extensive charters, or to privileged companies, but to the sober industry, the persevering enterprize, and the steady good sense of individuals. When he reflected, to use his own expression, that “there is no town in the kingdom which contributes proportionately so much to the revenue of the state, and which requires so little of that revenue expended upon it;”—when he considered that, with a population approaching to 150,000, Liverpool is without a barrack, a guard-house, or a single company

of soldiers ; a mind like his could not but ask, whence arose this beautiful order and harmony ? and discover the solution of that question in the active industry which creates and receives general employment : while, in the lesson which this example inculcates, he found a fresh proof of the necessity of giving expansion and growth to the industrious powers of the country. It was for this end that he laboured through his long public life—and the voice of impartial posterity will proclaim, that he has not laboured in vain.

From reflections such as these we must now return, and resume the course of a narrative, too soon to be fatally closed. If we have lingered awhile—if we have wished to turn aside for a moment from the contemplation of the dreadful catastrophe which changed a day of public rejoicing into one of national mourning—who shall condemn the weakness which has indulged in such a respite ! Who shall blame the mind which hesitates before it can summon up the courage requisite to enter upon the circumstantial details of a scene, which exhibited hope, pride, and intellect, crushed in a moment ! It is truly an awful consideration, that out of half a million of people assembled on this occasion of joy and festivity, death should have stricken “ the foremost man of the world,” and left the rest unscathed !—that of all those countless multitudes whom the morning had poured forth to swell the triumph, at night one only should be missing !

It is scarcely necessary to repeat here, that nothing could exceed the success of the undertaking, up to the moment of the arrival of the Procession at Parkside, where the Engine was stopped to take in a fresh supply of water. It has been said, that it was not intended for any one to leave the carriages, and that a placard to this effect was issued by the Directors. If such was the case, the advice was either little understood, or at any rate wholly neglected; for many, indeed most, of the gentlemen in the Northumbrian, in which the Directors and the most distinguished of the visitors were placed, took advantage of the interval during which the Procession stopped, to leave it and to disperse in various groupes on the rail-way. According to some of the accounts in the daily Journals, two of the steam-engines—the Phoenix and the North Star—passed without causing any accident; and the parties were returning into the grand Car, when an alarm was given, that the Rocket was rapidly approaching. This report caused considerable confusion, and every one hurried to resume his place. In the ordinary cars there were steps on each side, by which they could be easily entered; but these had been removed from the Northumbrian, it having been considered, that a flight of steps, in the manner of an accommodation ladder, suspended at the back, and which could be brought at will to any part of it, would afford greater convenience

to the ladies. Owing to this arrangement, a main chance of escape was cut off from those who were on the rail-road; and this explains the difficulty and danger experienced by Prince Esterhazy and several others, when they hastily endeavoured to regain their seats.

Among those who had descended was Mr. Huskisson. When about to return, he observed the Duke of Wellington in the front part of the Car, and, not having seen him before, he went round to welcome him on his visit to Liverpool, and to congratulate him on the satisfactory results of the morning's experiment.* To the short delay, arising from this

* It has been attempted to attach to the meeting at Liverpool a character of political intrigue, which was wholly contrary to the facts. While some have represented it as the stage where the alliance of Mr. Huskisson and the Whigs was to be consummated, others, with as little foundation, saw in it the preparation for his reconciliation with the Duke of Wellington. As circumstances, totally unconnected with politics, and merely fortuitous, have, perhaps, given a greater appearance of plausibility to the latter report, it may be proper briefly to state the simple truth. A long acquaintance with the Duke of Wellington, and the recollection which he retained of several kind offices received from him, had always kept alive in the mind of Mr. Huskisson sentiments of private regard for his Grace, and strengthened his wish to follow his example in continuing in private life the usual courtesies of society. Upon the present occasion, when the Duke was to receive the freedom of Liverpool—voted to him many years back for his great military services,—Mr. Huskisson naturally felt that, standing in the relation which he did towards Liverpool, it was especially incumbent upon him to pay to the Noble Duke every mark of respect and attention. Actuated by these motives, he had gone to the end of the Car to shake hands with him; and to the delay caused by this circumstance may be attributed the accident which followed.

act of courtesy, may be attributed the dreadful calamity which ensued. The cry arose, that the Rocket was rapidly advancing; Mr. Huskisson hurried round to the side of the Northumbrian, and grasping at the door, attempted to get in—the door swung back, and this sudden reaction threw him on the ground, at the moment when the fatal engine was coming on with the utmost velocity; and before its course could be arrested, he had received his mortal injury. Such, at least, is supposed to have been the case: but other explanations, as to the cause of the fearful accident, have been given, and every one can perfectly understand the impossibility of determining with certainty, the precise particulars of such a scene of horror and confusion.

But, whatever may have been the immediate occasion of his fall, he was himself convinced at once that the injury was fatal. Lord Wilton and several others were instantly at his side. They raised him a little, and a tourniquet, formed with a stick and a handkerchief, was applied without loss of time. He asked earnestly for Mrs. Hus-

That he was prompted by no calculations of politics, his intimate friends will perfectly understand; for more than one of them well knew his determination—formed from the conviction that their views of public policy were widely dissimilar—not again to accept office under the Duke of Wellington. But in referring to this determination on the part of Mr. Huskisson, it is only proper to add, that not the slightest overture towards any political reconciliation had been made to him from his Grace, since their separation in 1828.

kisson ; kissed her, and then said, " God bless you all—now let me die at once." From the hasty judgment which could be formed, it appeared to the professional gentlemen present, that there was a hope of saving his life by an amputation of the shattered limb. It was therefore agreed, that the most expeditious and most practicable method of proceeding would be to go on to Manchester, where the best surgical assistance could be speedily procured. A Car which had been occupied by the Band was emptied, and he was placed in it attended by Mrs. Huskisson, Lords Wilton and Colville, Dr. Brandreth of Liverpool, Dr. Hunter of Edinburgh, and Mr. Wainewright. The Engine was then detached from the larger carriage, and the utmost dispatch used for providing for the conveyance of the sufferer. Notwithstanding the agonies which he endured, no complaint or groan escaped him. He asked for a little water, with which Mrs. Huskisson moistened his lips, and he himself suggested the seeking the quiet of some private house if any could be found on the way, in preference to the crowd and confusion which must be encountered at Manchester. Lord Wilton named the Vicarage at Eccles, the residence of the Rev. Mr. Blackburne, through which village the procession passed. Mr. Huskisson caught eagerly at the proposal, and said, " Oh take me there ; I know they will be good to me." He spoke as if by inspiration. Kindness would, indeed, have been shewn by any under such circumstances ; but few

could have been so capable as Mrs. Blackburne to arrange with ready and affectionate attention, and to perform so quickly and with such perfect judgment, every thing which it could be hoped might in any way minister to his assistance. After depositing him at Eccles, Lord Wilton—whose kindness and exertions never flagged throughout all the melancholy occurrences of the day—proceeded with the engine to Manchester, and returned with incredible expedition, bringing with him Mr. Ransome, Mr. Whatton, and some other professional gentlemen. Mr. Huskisson himself had never doubted from the first that his injuries were mortal. But when the surgeons arrived, he expressed himself willing to undergo whatever might be judged satisfactory to the feelings or wishes of those who surrounded him. He only entreated that Mrs. Huskisson, who had never quitted him, would absent herself whilst Mr. Ransome and his colleagues examined what it might be possible to attempt. After a careful consultation, they decided unanimously that, in the extreme state of exhaustion to which the sufferer was reduced, amputation, though indispensable in order to effect a recovery, could not be undertaken without the most imminent danger; and Mr. Ransome candidly declared his conviction, that should he commence the operation under existing circumstances, the patient must inevitably expire under it.

Mrs. Huskisson was now permitted to return, and attempts were made to create a reaction by

administering powerful restoratives,—but in vain. Violent spasmodic convulsions rendered him gradually weaker, and occasionally wrung from him an expression of hope, that his sufferings might not be prolonged. But although his agonies were almost past endurance, there were no unnecessary ejaculations—no murmurings against the dispensations of Providence,—on the contrary, he evinced throughout the most patient fortitude and resignation. The clearness of his mind continued perfect and unclouded. He made a codicil to his Will, and gave directions on some minute points respecting the disposal of several of his private papers. It is also perfectly true, that having signed his name, he desired to have the paper brought back to him, in order to rectify an omission which he had made in the usual mode of his signature.

Soon after six o'clock, he desired to see Mr. Blackburne, in order to perform the last duties of religion. Before the Sacrament was administered, he used these words—"I can safely say that I bear no ill-will to any human being." It was at first feared that this ceremony would be attended with some difficulty, as he had been for some time unable to raise his head, or to swallow, and had only had his lips moistened occasionally with a feather. He, however, summoned up all his expiring strength, and with great exertion partook of the elements. This done, he again expressed his anxiety for a speedy release; and even those about him, when they beheld his hopeless sufferings, no

longer dared to wish them prolonged. Still, the kindness of his nature rose superior to his own agonies. Observing that her wretchedness had deprived Mrs. Huskisson of the power of utterance, and that she was incapable of replying even to the expression of some of his injunctions, he endeavoured to console her, and the last words which he addressed to her were an assurance, that he felt they should meet again. He then recommended her to the care of Lord Wilton. Speaking of himself, he certainly used the expression which has been reported—"the Public have had the best of me, and I trust they will do me justice." This was the only allusion which he made to his public character. He appeared to receive much gratification from the presence of Lord Granville,* to whom he spoke several times in terms of the greatest affection. He continued, indeed, to be sensible of all that had been done for him, and grateful to all those around him, especially to Lord Wilton; upon whom he said he had no claim, as little previous acquaintance had subsisted between them. Soon after eight, it became evident that he

* Lord Granville was one of the oldest and most valued friends of Mr. Huskisson, and the one whom, perhaps, he would most have desired to be with him at such an hour. Lord Granville had hurried to Eccles, as soon as he learnt that it was determined to deposit Mr. Huskisson at the vicarage there; nor did he quit the house till the moment when Mrs. Huskisson set out on her mournful return to Sussex. During the whole of the painful scene he evinced, by his considerate and unvarying tenderness towards her, the sincerity of his attachment to the friend, whom through life he had loved and respected.

was sinking rapidly, and at five minutes after nine nature was completely exhausted, and he breathed his last, after nine hours of the most excruciating torture.*

Mrs. Huskisson having been removed from the room by the care of her friends, the surgeons proceeded to a nearer investigation of the injuries which Mr. Huskisson had sustained. It was then discovered, that he must have fallen obliquely as regarded the line of the rail-road, and that the thigh and leg must have been in such a position as to have formed with it a triangle, of which the angle at the apex would be presented by the bend of the knee. The wheel of the engine thus passed over the calf of the leg and the middle of the thigh, leaving the knee itself uninjured. There was a compound fracture in the upper part of the left leg, just above the calf. The wheel must have gone slantingly over the thigh, up to the middle of it; as the muscles were all laid bare in that direction in one immense flap, and the bone was severely fractured, and comminuted almost to a powder. No great

* It is due to the character of all parties to mention that, as soon as the extent of the frightful accident became known, a general wish was declared, that the Procession should return at once to Liverpool. It was only upon a representation of the confusion, and even danger, which might be feared from the disappointment of the public, that the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel consented to proceed to Manchester; where, however, neither of them would leave the Car. The Duke, moreover, postponed the ceremony of receiving the freedom, which was to have taken place on the 16th, to some future period, and all the other arrangements for the week were abandoned.

effusion of blood took place, nor did any of the great arteries appear to have been wounded ; but the laceration is described to have been terrible. Such, at least, are the statements of the Journals of that fearful day ; and from these the compiler must borrow not only in this respect, but in others of the melancholy particulars. He himself was at the time far absent from England.

The death of Mr. Huskisson was made known in Liverpool at an early hour on Thursday morning ; and though it had been anticipated as certain by all who knew the nature of the accident, yet it took the bulk of the people by surprise. All the shops and dwelling-houses were partially closed, from one end of the town to the other. The flags on the public buildings and on the shipping in the port, were hoisted half-mast, and the inhabitants, without distinction of party, were plunged into the deepest sorrow. A very general wish was expressed, that the remains of their lamented representative should be interred in the new Cemetery, and that a public monument should be erected over them, recording the melancholy event, and rendering a well-deserved tribute to his memory. A meeting of gentlemen accordingly took place at the Town Hall on the Thursday, to consider of the subject, and the following Requisition to the Mayor was unanimously agreed upon :

“ We, the undersigned, respectfully request that you, as the official organ of the Inhabitants of Liverpool, will make an immediate application to the Friends of our late lamented

Representative, requesting that his remains may be interred within the precincts of this town, in which his distinguished public worth and private virtue secured for him the respect and esteem of the whole community.

To this requisition the names of two hundred and sixty-four most respectable and influential gentlemen were almost immediately attached. The request was promptly acceded to, and the Rev. J. Brooks, the Rector, was desired to proceed to Eccles, to see Mrs. Huskisson or her friends on the subject. The idea of Mr. Huskisson's interment at Liverpool had been already broken to Mrs. Huskisson; but she had expressed the strongest repugnance to the thought of such an arrangement. All her own wishes had naturally pointed to Earham, and it was only through the powerful arguments and strong representations of Lord Granville, that she was at last prevailed upon to sacrifice her own feelings, and to yield to the request of the Inhabitants of Liverpool. Never was a sacrifice of private feelings more honourably and solemnly requited. It was forcibly remarked at the time, that if any thing could supersede the necessity of endeavouring to draw a character of Mr. Huskisson, it was to be found in the circumstance of his funeral. It spoke volumes. A community, composed entirely of active intelligent individuals, who, of all others are best able to appreciate the merits of a man ruling and regulating the destinies of a commercial people, and that community consisting of a hundred and fifty thousand individuals, de-

ploring his loss with a grief as intense and real as is occasioned by the severing of kindred ties. We quote from the "TIMES" newspaper the account of the last ceremony. It is given there with a force of description, and a truth of detail, which could be vainly attempted by those whose melancholy duties absorbed all powers of observation.

" Liverpool, Friday, September 24th.

" The funeral of Mr. Huskisson has just taken place, and with such marks of public respect, regard, and sorrow, as must soothe the grief of his surviving friends, and animate the exertions of future statesmen. Though the day came in with hail, and wet, and gloom, and storm, and every other disagreeable incident of bad weather, there was scarcely a single person of opulence, talent, and respectability in Liverpool, who was deterred by it from attending the melancholy pageant, of which I have been anxiously watching the progress and termination.

" Had I not seen, I certainly could not have credited the deep feeling of regret which prevails amongst all classes in this place for the loss of their late able and active Representative. The people seem to feel as if they had lost a friend and a brother; and though much of their attachment may be fairly attributed to their conviction of the private virtues of the Man, it is impossible to deny, that much is also owing to their admiration of the industry, sagacity, and wisdom of the Minister. Perhaps, also, the lamentable and unexpected accident which deprived him of life, in the midst of a scene of general mirth and festivity, and upon an occasion so peculiarly interesting to the town of Liverpool, has contributed, in some degree, to increase the general sympathy created by his loss. But be that as it may, never did I see at any of the public funerals which

I have attended of late years, such sincere sorrow, and such unaffected regret as I have witnessed this morning on the countenances of thousands, during the celebration of the funeral obsequies of Mr. Huskisson.

“ The bells of the different churches, which began to toll at an early hour this morning, and which continued to toll at intervals during the day, reminded the inhabitants of Liverpool, in very audible tones, of the melancholy duty which they had undertaken to perform that day. I was in the streets soon after eight o'clock ; but though they were then much crowded, all the shops were closed, and all the private houses had their blinds down. The vessels in the docks and in the river had their flags half-mast high, but their crews had mostly deserted them to evince their sympathy with the melancholy feelings of their brother townsmen. On the line of streets through which the procession was to pass, strong bodies of special constables were patrolling, in order to prevent any interruption to its progress, after it had once started. But the excellent temper of the people, and the provident precautions of the Committee in railing off the centre part of the street for the purposes of the procession, rendered their duty almost a sinecure. There was no fighting or struggling for places, nor any thing but the utmost decorum of language and behaviour in the immense multitude which lined the way from the Town-hall to the Cemetery.

“ It was perfectly well known to be one of the arrangements of the Committee, that the procession should start from the Town-hall as soon after ten o'clock as it could be conveniently marshalled into form. For the purpose of ensuring regularity, the Committee agreed to assemble at the Town-hall at eight o'clock this morning ; and exactly at that hour, two mutes, on horseback, took their station in front of its doors, and six mutes on foot were placed in the vestibule, and on different parts of the great staircase.

At nine o'clock the doors were thrown open for the reception of such gentlemen as had previously announced to the Committee their intention of being present at Mr. Huskisson's funeral. The punctuality of their attendance was most praiseworthy. On reaching the vestibule, the first object which attracted their attention must have been the Coffin in which the mortal remains of Mr. Huskisson were enclosed, attended by mutes and numerous truncheon-bearers. It stood upon trestles, on the left side of the room, and was covered with a pall of black velvet, edged with satin. Upon the pall the arms and crest of the deceased were emblazoned in all the empty and unavailing pride of heraldic ornament. After passing the coffin, the different groups of gentlemen were ushered, as they arrived, into the splendid suite of apartments which render the Town-hall of Liverpool so famous, and by ten o'clock the whole of them had made their appearance.

"Wishing to see the state of the streets through which it was designed to pass, I walked along them to the Cemetery. In spite of the drizzling rain which had been falling for some time, they were crowded along the whole line. The children of the different charity-schools were assembled in the yard of St. Peter's church; and upon its belfry and steeple, and in its windows, numbers of children of a larger growth were also stationed. The trees before the Lyceum and in St. Mark's churchyard had their strength well tried by the numbers who, in every direction, were clinging to their branches. The ascent up Duke-street to the Cemetery was made through one dense mass of men, women, and children; and it would have been impossible to have travelled along it otherwise than by walking through the space railed off from the street for the procession.

On reaching the Cemetery, I found the whole outer area surrounded by an expecting multitude. Between Hope-street and Rodney-street, and also in Hope-street itself,

there are several lofty houses, not quite finished. The roofs and windows of these mansions were all occupied. Placards had been very generally circulated throughout the town, stating that the rails which surrounded the Cemetery were not strong enough to support the pressure of a crowd, and requesting the people, as they wished to avoid accident, not to stand upon the stone wall, on the top of which the rails are fixed. The caution was not unattended to—a fact which speaks volumes as to the tractable spirit and chastened feeling of the crowd. Some idea of its numbers may be obtained from a knowledge of the fact, that the circuit of the rails amounts to nearly eleven hundred yards. The grass plat or lawn at the bottom of the Cemetery was at this time nearly empty. There were only a few workmen in it, and these were near the vault. I had the curiosity to approach and examine it. It is twelve feet deep, and the six nearest the bottom are cased all round with iron. A heavy lid of the same material was reclining against one of the walls of the cemetery, and was to be placed over the body as soon as the funeral ceremony was finished.

After I had gratified my curiosity, I looked up at the scene around and above me, and nothing could be more imposing and magnificent than the *coup d'œil* then before me. I was at the bottom of a dell, about sixty feet below the ordinary level of the streets of Liverpool. On the east, I saw before me a solid mass of masonry, with four different tiers of galleries diverging from a centre nearly opposite me, and running one above the other to the two extremities of the Cemetery on that side. Each of these tiers was filled with respectable individuals habited in deep mourning. Above them were the people outside the railing; and above them again were houses and scaffoldings covered with spectators. Turning to the south, I beheld a double gallery filled in a similar manner. On the west,

the scene was still more picturesque, as the bank rises gradually till it comes to a double tier of terraces, and is then surmounted by the beautiful cluster of trees which crown St. James's-walk. Every accessible point in this direction was occupied by ladies and gentlemen of the first families in Liverpool. The north side was at this time unoccupied, and in that direction I could only catch a glimpse of the multitude peeping through the rails. To prevent the decorum of the ceremony from being interrupted by individuals passing and repassing to and from different sets of galleries, boards were erected at various places to stop the usual communication between them. The whole mass of people in the Cemetery was therefore nearly immoveable. Their numbers must have been nearer twenty thousand than fifteen thousand persons. It is impossible for me to convey to you any adequate notion of the effect of the spectacle thus exhibited to my eyes, in a spot where art and nature have combined together to produce one of the most picturesque and imposing scenes that the imagination of man can possibly conceive.

At a quarter past ten o'clock, the firing of a signal gun, which was stationed opposite the new Custom-house, gave us notice in the Cemetery that the procession had begun to move from the Town-hall. I am informed that twenty-five minutes elapsed from the time when the mutes started, to the time when the last persons in the procession left the Town-hall. The distance which the procession traversed is about two thousand yards, and its own length was nearly half a mile.

"The head of the procession reached the Cemetery at a quarter before twelve o'clock, and at that moment the view from the gateway down Duke-street was most striking. In the centre of the street, but not occupying its entire width, a long dark column of men, plumes, horses, and carriages, was seen advancing slowly through an immense crowd

ranged in the most perfect order, and observing the deepest silence on each side of it. The turret of St. James's church, the wall skirting its yard, the windows and roofs of all the houses, were almost groaning under the weight of the spectators seated upon them. As the hearse advanced, all this vast crowd uncovered, and the dark appearance of the moving procession, and the mottled appearance of the bare-headed and immoveable multitude, which was gazing intently upon it, formed a very marked contrast to each other. A small piece of cannon, which had been previously stationed on St. James's Mount, was fired as a signal to the town, as soon as the procession began to enter the Cemetery.

"The mutes on horseback took their position one at each side of the entrance. The gentlemen of the town, instead of proceeding into the chapel, filed off to the right, breaking their lines of six, into lines of three deep, and descended without delay into the Cemetery. Part of their path ran through an arched passage or tunnel cut through the solid rock; and to a person standing on the neighbouring heights there was something very romantic and picturesque in the manner in which they alternately appeared and disappeared from view. They then proceeded to range themselves on the serpentine walks which skirt the centre grass-plot, where the vault was dug for Mr. Huskisson's remains. At a distance they appeared to have grouped themselves in the shape of a diamond, a vacant space being left at the angle nearest the spectator for the bearers of the coffin to carry it to the grave.

"Whilst this arrangement was taking place in the Cemetery, the Committee and the Clergy were employed in forming along the road between the entrance of the Cemetery and the door of the chapel. The different pall-bearers then ranged themselves in order to receive the coffin and to take the pall, and as soon as they had done this, and the mourners had taken their place in the rear, the Rev. J.

Brooks, who had previously met the coffin, began to read the funeral service, and to move into the chapel. As the pallbearers and mourners passed them, the clergy and the Committee filed into the procession, and thus the funeral party entered the chapel. Immediately afterwards the gates of the Cemetery were closed, and the gentlemen who had followed the hearse filed off to the gate at the top of Hope-street, where accommodation had been previously prepared for them.

“The chapel was arranged with the most simple and beautiful elegance for this melancholy occasion. There is on each side of it a single row of pews. These were hung with black cloth, both on the inside and on the out. So, too, was the reading-desk. It was likewise ornamented with Mr. Huskisson’s escutcheon, splendidly emblazoned. The coffin having been placed on trestles under the reading-desk, the mourners took their seats in the different pews previously assigned to them. The funeral service then proceeded. When the clergyman came to that portion of it, which is usually read by the side of the grave, the parties left the chapel in nearly the same order in which they entered it. On quitting the chapel, which is only visible from a small part of the Cemetery, you face the dell in which it is situate, and look down upon it from a precipitous and isolated projection of rocks several yards high. The cortège, having ranged itself on the brink of this rock, became an object of intense interest to such spectators as could command a view of it. After the pause of a few moments, it was again put in motion, and winded slowly down the serpentine tunnel through which the gentlemen of the town had previously “wound in solemn march their long array.” At the same moment the gentlemen who had followed the hearse obtained admission into the north side of the Cemetery, and thus all its four sides were crowned with a living mass of anxious spectators.

“ As the body was proceeding from the chapel to the grave, the weather, which had been most unfavourable during the whole of the morning, suddenly changed, and a bright gleam of sunshine flung its radiance over the moving train. In a few minutes it reached the vault. As the bearers left the walks and entered upon the turf of the grass-plots, the gentlemen extended their line and filled up the space in the walks which they had previously left vacant. At that moment, the head of every man in the immense assemblage collected in and about the cemetery was uncovered, as if by general consent. There was a moral sublimity in the spectacle, which all who were present felt, but which I am afraid is not communicable to those who were absent. I have seen more than one public funeral, and I know something of the gorgeous pageantry so lavishly displayed in the burials of our Monarchs; but though I saw the ashes of Grattan and Canning deposited in one of the most august of Christian temples amid the vain regrets of men the most distinguished for rank, talent, and genius, and though the interment of Royalty takes hold upon the imagination from its necessary connection with the most sumptuous display of human pomp and greatness, I never witnessed any spectacle so impressive as the appearance of this vast multitude, standing erect under the open canopy of Heaven, and joining in one spontaneous tribute of respect to the memory of their late Representative. All eyes were then turned upon the vault, and Mr. Brooks proceeded to the conclusion of the service for the dead, amid the deep attention of his hearers, and the uncontrollable emotion of some of the mourners. At a quarter past one o'clock the melancholy ceremony was brought to a close, and another signal gun was fired to communicate the tidings to the people in the town ”

If the circumstances of Mr. Huskisson's death were such as to excite in an unusual degree the feelings of the Public, the posture of affairs at the moment when his career was so suddenly terminated, tended greatly to enhance the measure of the calamity, in the eyes of all thinking people; and heavily and mournfully as his loss pressed upon the nation, in the first hour of grief and horror, it may safely be asserted, that it was still more heavily and mournfully felt, when the events which ensued upon the meeting of Parliament produced the resignation of the Duke of Wellington.

It is probable that in the arrangements for the new Government, Mr. Huskisson would have filled an important station; and with all the respect which is justly due to the talents, and with all the confidence which is placed in the intentions, of the present Administration, it is impossible not to feel—not to see daily and hourly—that the absence of the long practical experience and consummate abilities of Mr. Huskisson has left a vacancy which we vainly seek to supply with any living statesman. It may be, perhaps, true, that there are many who possess some one or other of his various acquirements, and that the same portion of knowledge and intelligence still survives, diffused through Parliament; but where shall we hope to find the individual who combines within himself all the various qualities by which he was so extraordinarily distinguished—a genius for

finance, which may be said to have been born with him, cultivated by long and unwearied application—an acquaintance with all the different and conflicting interests of the greatest commercial empire that ever existed, such as was scarcely equalled by those whose whole lives had been devoted to that especial pursuit—unremitting industry—a talent for business unexampled—a quickness to comprehend and a facility to explain, which can only be justly appreciated by those who have transacted business with him—all these, joined to the most extended and enlightened views, and guided by the soundest and most practised judgment and the strictest integrity?

Besides all these advantages he had inherited, in a great measure, that political influence which Mr. Canning had obtained on the continents of Europe and America; and this, united to the high opinion which existed of his own personal character and abilities, gave to him a weight with the various Governments of the civilized world, which, in the present distracted state of European politics, might have been found of essential importance.

There are many who still love to contemplate the fame of these two great men as one and indivisible,—who delight to consider them as forming one bright emanation of intellectual spirit, too vast for the narrow cell of a single mortal tenement,—as possessing between them every natural endowment, and every acquired attainment which

are requisite to form a perfect Statesman ;—and who find, in the moment when, in the fulness of their fame, they were severally lost to their country and to the world, fresh grounds of melancholy parallel and resemblance in their respective fortunes. Mr. Canning was snatched away at the very crisis of our foreign Policy, leaving the great questions of Greece and Portugal (to the successful termination of which he alone was, perhaps, competent) unsettled :—Mr. Huskisson has, in like manner, left the most important arrangements of our domestic Policy—the renewal of the Bank and East-India Charters—similarly circumstanced ; and where shall we now seek a mind like his, which can bring to their complicated consideration and final adjustment resources so varied and profound, or views so just and enlightened ?

Exposed as the conduct of every public man must necessarily be to misconstruction and misrepresentation, no Minister was ever so frequently misunderstood and misrepresented as was Mr. Huskisson. Whilst every restriction relaxed, every impediment removed, in our commercial system, drew down upon him the most unjust imputations from that party which was wedded to “ the wisdom of our ancestors,” he had equally to defend himself against the zealots of the opposite party, who were for proceeding in their course of innovation, heedless alike of prudence and of equity. Far from being slavishly addicted to fanciful theories, a careful examination of his

measures will sufficiently prove that they were grounded wholly upon principles of practical knowledge, or of paramount political necessity. He never attempted to assert that, if all the restrictions and prohibitions which formerly protected our commercial intercourse with other nations could have been still quietly maintained—if the rest of the world would still have tamely acquiesced in our exclusive system, and have continued content to see Great Britain usurp the entire control and dictation of the terms, under which all international commerce should be tolerated—those restrictions and prohibitions should have been unnecessarily removed, and the interests of this country sacrificed to an idle display of spurious liberality,—of what has been sarcastically termed “cosmopolitan enthusiasm.” No Minister was ever less deserving of these reproaches. His policy towards foreign states was simply this (a policy which he equally enforced the wisdom of applying to questions of a domestic nature)—to prefer granting as a boon those indulgences which, if obstinately withheld, his penetration enabled him to foresee would shortly be extorted as a right; or the denial of which, if obstinately persisted in, must involve us in an endless warfare of retaliation. His comprehensive and upright mind taught him the folly as well as the injustice of declaring war with a foreign power, because, in defence of its own marine that power had adopted as a general rule towards other countries the system

rigorously enforced by Great Britain,—claiming, in fact, nothing more than the undoubted right of every independent state—reciprocity.

It was his very anxiety to steer between extremes, to conciliate the interests of all parties, to benefit all without injustice to any, to proceed in his plans of reform and improvement steadily and earnestly, but with a due regard to the claims of those who had been led to invest their property under a different state of things, which they had imprudently imagined would endure for ever, that united against him the Ultras of both Schools. While by the one party all the distress which visited the country was ascribed to his alterations; by the other it was attempted to be shown, that those alterations were more specious than real, and that he had merely exchanged a system of exclusion for one of prohibitory duties. The very approbation and support of those who professed to applaud his general policy were too often narrowed by selfish and interested feelings. Was a duty to be lowered, or a prohibition removed, the wisdom which dictated such changes was unsparingly extolled as a general system, but the application to the particular case was as unsparingly censured:—was the duty on foreign ores to be diminished, the whole mining property of the country was up in arms at so ruinous an innovation:—was foreign corn to be admitted to the English market, Mr. Huskisson was ready to sacrifice the landed interest to his wild theories of

commercial policy :—was the English corn grower to be protected by a moderate duty, he was truckling to the agricultural party, and meanly abandoning his own recorded principles ! Under all the disadvantages against which he had to struggle—under all the obstacles which opposed themselves to every step he took—Mr. Huskisson moved patiently forward, his mind always intent upon the same object, and, having once fixed the wedge, always cautiously, but firmly, impelling it, as he saw opportunity favoured. By these means he accomplished in the five years, during which he presided over important departments of the State, more than any other person would, perhaps, have been able to have achieved under similar circumstances. Yet, how small a part did it form of what he contemplated, of what he might have been enabled to perform, had his life been spared a few years longer !

In his long public career he proved himself the consistent advocate of enlarged and liberal views of social government—a steady friend to religious toleration, and a determined enemy to the Slave Trade, ever desirous to ameliorate the condition of the negroes and to extend to them the benefits of civilization. If we study his policy, as regards our Eastern Empire, we discover the same generous anxiety for the improvement of the native population, the same wish to raise them in the scale of humanity, by the aid of moral and religious

instruction. Possessed of great natural endowments, he cultivated them with unremitting industry, and applied them to the mastering of the most difficult subjects. His rise to the highest office was unattended with any sacrifice of principles, and though willing to merge trifling peculiarities of opinion in combined efforts for the good of the nation, he compromised neither his honour nor his independence; to the maintenance of which he was always ready to relinquish the rank and emoluments of place.

Amid all the bitterness of political animosity his integrity was unsullied by even a breath of suspicion. Easy of access, and free from the repulsive formality which sometimes springs from long habits of official life, he ever gave a patient hearing to those who came to him on matters of business; and no one left him without a conviction that his intentions were honest, and his decisions governed by a regard for public good, however unpalatable in their application to their own individual case. Many who were known to differ, and to differ conscientiously, from him when they only looked at his measures in a confined view, and who thought that on certain subjects they could not be convinced against their own impressions,—many of these, who were not before acquainted with him personally, have been known to come out from a half-hour's conversation converted by his arguments and overcome by the confiding sweetness and simplicity of his manner. Devoid

of vanity and indifferent to applause, he was supposed by the world to be alike indifferent to the obloquy which was heaped upon him. Such, it has been shewn, was not the case, however impenetrable he appeared to bear himself.

It is not easy, perhaps it is not possible, to convey a just idea of Mr. Huskisson's style of oratory. To the more finished graces of eloquence, to the adornments of imagery, he laid no claims; yet there are passages in his Speeches which, in unaffected plainness of language, and in beauty and nobleness of sentiment, are rarely excelled. His Speeches have never been surpassed, perhaps will never be equalled, in the display of deep research and unbounded information. Unpromising as were the subjects to which he usually confined himself, by a large proportion of his audience their dryness appeared to be forgotten when he rose, and the House seemed to lean forward to receive instruction from, and to yield up their minds to, his calm, profound, and searching philosophy; even Arithmetic in his hands assumed the persuasive powers of eloquence, and no speaker was more rapturously or frequently cheered, as he successively elucidated some fresh mystery of Commercial Policy.

It has been remarked, that great as were his powers of debate, he seldom irritated his opponents. This is true. If he used sarcasm, it was very rarely of such a nature as to provoke resentment. Indeed, the dislike he entertained

to the employment of any language which, from its severity, might give pain or offence, was so inherent and so sincere, that he invariably checked the indulgence of it in those around him, and many instances could be given where he has rejected the use of an illustration, or declined a quotation, from this feeling. His style of speaking was principally remarkable for the absence of extraneous ornament, and for the readiness with which he was prepared to substantiate his own, and to overwhelm the assertions of his opponents, by the test of close calculation and severe arithmetical demonstration. His materials were so ample, the resources of his mind and the quickness of perception so great, that while he spoke his subject constantly branched out into fresh channels, and presented to him fresh views and fresh reasonings to support his argument. Hence it was, that in the notes which he sometimes prepared for his more laboured displays are scarcely to be recognized the fount and origin of all that inexhaustible stream of facts and deductions which flowed from him as he pursued his subject. Yet with all the fresh springs, which opened as he went along, his course was never confused, never involved, and it was owing to this clearness that, long and minute as many of his great speeches are, and rigidly as they adhere to the original thesis, they never fatigued. Wholly engrossed with his subject, he seldom turned aside to seek the aid and embellishment of classical allusions ;

and it is believed that, with the exception of the passage in his Speech on being removed from office in 1828, in which he compared the message of the Duke of Wellington to the command given by Popilius to Antiochus, he will be found to have made use of no Latin quotation, and those from English authors are unusually rare.

To this imperfect sketch may be subjoined one extracted from the last "Annual Obituary ;"* and another, which appeared, some years back, in an anonymous work, called "Babylon the Great." It should be observed, that the latter work was published early in 1825 ; consequently, prior to the delivery of most of those speeches on which Mr. Huskisson's fame as a political debater principally rests.

"Of eloquence, in the ordinary sense of the term, Mr. Huskisson had but little. He could neither gripe nor hold fast the heart, like Mr. Brougham, by the irresistible energy of his appeals ; nor could he please the ear and the fancy with the nicely-modulated language and effervescing wit of Mr. Canning. Yet not even the former, in his most solemn adjuration, nor the latter, in his happiest flight, ever commanded the attention of his hearers more completely than Mr. Huskisson. He was never unprepared, whatever might be the subject of discussion ; and it was not in set harangues only that he excelled—he was a clever and able debater.

* Amongst a few other errors, perfectly unintentional we are sure, which appear in the Biographical sketch of Mr. Huskisson, in this very respectable publication, it is proper to notice the statement of his having been "connected with the London Corresponding Society,"—a circumstance wholly unknown to any of his friends, and, as it is believed, totally unfounded.

When he first entered on his subject, his manner was cold, almost heavy ; his intonation equable, almost monotonous ; he had no peculiar grace of action. The secret of his oratory lay in the facility with which he could bring a number of facts to bear upon his argument, and in the soundness and comprehensiveness of his views. He was not an opponent with whom it was difficult to grapple, for he disdained all slippery arts of avoiding an antagonist ; but he was one whom the stoutest champion found it impossible to throw. To the matter-of-fact arguer, Mr. Huskisson could present an accumulation of details sufficient to stagger the most practical ; while to him who looked to rules rather than cases, he could offer general principles, conceived in so large a spirit, that even in his dry and unadorned enunciation of them, they rose to sublimity. Nothing could be finer than the splendid perorations of his more elaborate speeches. It was by the combination of an attention so accurate that the most minute objection did not escape its vigilance, and a judgment so comprehensive that the greatest could not elude its grasp, coupled with habits of unremitting industry, and perfect integrity of purpose, that Mr. Huskisson on every question of complication and importance, reigned almost undisputed in the House of Commons.

“ Irresistible as it generally proved, no one, however, dreaded his power. He convinced, or he silenced, but he never irritated. His peculiar calmness of temper kept him from indulging in sarcasm. He seldom uttered an ill-natured word, because he was seldom influenced by an ill-natured feeling.”

In the Parliamentary Portraits contained in the second named work, after describing Mr. Canning, the Author thus introduces Mr. Huskisson.

“ You may observe the glorious Gothic head of his most

profound coadjutor. It is a plain head, and small labour of the barber has been bestowed upon the outside. I know not whether he be a phrenologist; though I should rather imagine that he knows the whim and laughs at it; but certainly he seems to stand less in awe of phrenological criticism, than any Member of the House, who could, if he chose, command sufficient pilosity for a screen, for his hair is cropped as close as that of a ploughman. This circumstance increases the size of his face, especially his forehead, and gives him, when the light does not fall so as to bring out the acute lines and wonderful indications of depth upon it, an air which you would be apt to call commonplace, if not heavy.

“ Mr. Huskisson is altogether the most difficult character to manage in the whole House. There is nothing in his appearance, his manner, or his speaking, upon which you can hitch even the slightest descriptive figure; and if it were possible to disembody sheer political intellect, and leave it without any of the trappings of ornament, that would be the nearest approach to a likeness of this most plain but profound member of St. Stephen's. Mr. Huskisson's bearing is remarkably shrewd and firm; and though he deals not much either in irony or declamation—and the less he deals in them the better—he occasionally sends forth a look, while some pretender is uttering a little truism with oracular gravity, which is more cutting and corrective than any commentary in words. He is very unassuming, but withal so self-possessed, and so decided, that you do not need to be told that he has examined, with the eye of a true philosopher, all the bearings of every subject that comes before the House. His voice is against him, for it is feeble without softness, and he gains nothing either by show or fluency of language; but still the impression which he leaves upon your mind is, that he has more expansion

and depth of intellect, and more range and inflexibility of purpose, than any man within the same walls."

To these we are tempted to add one more extract. It is from the Liverpool Journal of the 18th of September, and bears evident marks of a powerful and discriminating mind.

" Politics this week, must give place to an expression of sorrow for the melancholy event which has deprived Commerce of her best friend, Liverpool of an honest Representative, and the Empire of a Statesman who has left behind him no equal. The disastrous details of Mr. Huskisson's death will be found in another part of our paper; and the heart saddens into inexpressible grief, to find "one of earth's great spirits" cut off in the moment of exultation; and though there was "reckoning made," the event was, alas! sudden enough to be pronounced awful. The survivors, however, are more deserving of sympathy than the departed. He could afford to die, much better than we could afford to lose him;* and it must have soothed his manly spirit, in the last agonies of existence, to know that he encountered death in endeavouring to forward the interest of that Commerce which he had lived to promote. A nation, he knew, would mourn his loss, and his Constitu-

* It is almost impossible in reading this, not to recall that beautiful passage of Cicero, where he speaks of the death of Hortensius,—
 " Tum occidit, cum lugere facilius rempublicam posset, si viveret, quam juvare; vixitque tamdiu quam licuit in civitate bene beateque vivere; nostro incommodo, detrimentoque, si est ita necesse, doleamus: illius vero mortis opportunitatem benevolentiam potius quam misericordiam prosequamur; ut, quotiescunque de clarissimo et beatissimo viro cogitemus, illum potius quam nosmetipsos, diligere videamur. Nam, si id dolemus, quod eo jam frui nobis non licet; nostrum est id malum; quod modice feramus, ne id, non ad amicitiam, sed ad domesticam utilitatem, referre videamur."—*Cicero de Claris Oratoribus.*

ents do honour to his memory. We trust his remains, as has been suggested, will be deposited in the St. James's Cemetery. The public, we know, will rejoice in the opportunity of testifying their veneration, by erecting a suitable monument.*

“ Mr. Huskisson was truly one of the Nobles of Nature. He achieved greatness by mental exertions ; and his name is endearing, because it was attained by those patriot services which are identified with revolutions in political science. He taught nations the way to be wisely great ; and in bursting the shackles which restrained the energies of Trade, gave a mighty impulse at once both to industry and mind.

“ Mr. Huskisson was not one of those fortunate politicians who are prematurely thrust into power. Though early dignified by the friendship of Mr. Dundas, he seems to have wanted those qualities that conciliate the great. The praise of usefulness could not be denied him ; but his colleagues were slow to recognize in him the attributes which, at a later period, rendered him so formidable to his opponents in the House of Commons. With an unostentatious patriotism he was content to suggest measures, and allow others the applause ; and that political humility must have been great, which could endure, in silence, to hear awarded to less talented co-operators, the praise which, of right, did not belong to them.

“ The capacity of his mind was large, and in its comprehension looked abroad with philosophic liberality, neg-

* It was immediately resolved, that a splendid Monument should be erected at Liverpool, and a large sum has been subscribed by the inhabitants for this purpose. A tablet recording the melancholy catastrophe has also been placed on the spot where it occurred. The execution of the monument intended to be raised in the Cathedral church at Chichester has been committed to Mr. Carew, an artist of very promising genius, who has already finished a cast of it.

lectful of self, and solicitous only for the establishment of truth. There was nothing narrow in his views. His policy was marked by a generous philanthropy, that contemplated man every where as a fellow being; and knowing that we were intended for other purposes than those which arise out of warfare and enmity, he sought to establish a brotherhood of nations, that could not fail to promote universal happiness, and increase still farther the greatness of his own country. For what he has accomplished, the benedictions of the intelligent portion of the world will follow him to the grave; and while men will bless his memory, the commercial world will lament that his life was not longer spared to consummate the great work he had so nobly began."

On his retirement from office in 1801, Mr. Huskisson received a nominal pension of £1,200, but netting only £900 a year (contingent upon his not holding any office of that value), with a remainder of £615 to Mrs. Huskisson, to commence from his death. He was subsequently appointed colonial agent for the island of Ceylon, the salary of which was at first £800 a year, but was afterwards raised, by the voluntary act of the island, to £1,200, as a special remuneration of his valuable services. When placed at the head of the Board of Trade, he considered an agency as incompatible with that high appointment, and resigned it.*

Before Lord Liverpool's political demise he had, unsolicited, given instructions that Mr. Huskisson

* This was done long before the suggestion was started (which was carried into effect in 1826), of giving him a separate salary as President of that Board.

should be designated for one of the six pensions of £3,000, which, by Act of Parliament, the Crown is empowered to bestow on persons who have served particular offices for a certain period, and on his final removal from Government in 1828, he entered upon the receipt of this pension, in which his former one, of course, merged.

In private life, Mr. Huskisson's character will challenge the closest scrutiny. There, even calumny is silent. Those who profess not to number themselves among his political admirers admit the kindness of his nature, the integrity of his conduct, and the purity of his mind, while they bear undisputed testimony to the charm of his manners in social intercourse. There was, nevertheless, in ordinary society, if nothing arose to call him forth, a degree of restraint, almost of coldness, in his demeanour, which did not, at first, prepossess in his favour, and which caused many to feel a difficulty in making his acquaintance, and led them to a wrong estimate of his character and of his disposition. But this difficulty once mastered,—the ice once broken—place yourself once at ease with him,—no one was more delightful, no one possessed greater attraction, and all impressions of reserve or of indifference vanished before the rapid transitions of intellectual expression which lit up his countenance as he conversed, the tone of his voice, and the peculiar sweetness of his smile. Constitutionally averse from all display, his manner was chiefly captivating from the indulgent kindness, the

easy gaiety, and the unaffected simplicity with which he laid aside all traces of the statesman, and identified himself with the pursuits, the interests, and the feelings of others. Fond of society, he was courted and esteemed by all who knew him, and he lived in habits of intimacy and friendship with the most eminent persons of all parties, uninterrupted by any differences of political opinion. But it was in the narrowest and inmost circle of domestic life,—in the company of his most intimate friends, and around his own fireside, that all the beauties of his mind, and all the charms of his nature, could alone be appreciated. It was there that the feelings of affection towards him were sublimed (if the expression may be pardoned) by the admiration of his superior endowments; it was there that the sweetness of his temper, and the benevolence which beamed in his eye and marked every sentiment which fell from his lips, were irresistibly felt and acknowledged. Whether estimated as husband, relation, or friend—as a magistrate, a landlord, or a master, he deserved and secured unbounded love, respect and confidence. Charitable without ostentation, his purse was ever open to the calls of distress. No misery was suffered to exist in the village where he resided: the President of the Board of Trade, or the Secretary of State, never refused his assistance or advice towards adjusting the disputes, or arranging the difficulties of his humble neighbours. None ever left his door unrelieved, and none ever received

from him a harsh word. Such was he whom it has been attempted to paint in the most repulsive colours, to represent as indifferent to the wants and sufferings of his fellow-creatures, as ready to view the misery of thousands unmoved for the sake of an experiment in political economy!

We will only add, that "if ever there was a man, raised above his fellows by station and ability, who was formed to conciliate the affection and secure the esteem of those who were his inferiors in both, it was he who is now the object of our just and deserved regret."*

* From a sermon preached at Liverpool, on the Sunday after the funeral, by the Rev. Augustus Campbell, one of the rectors.

[Autograph. to front p 268.]

Private East India Committee
8 March/30.

My Dear Madam

I send you a
Letter (now a month old)
from Mr Young. I have
heard nothing of any
consequence - I am afraid
therefore that the punctuality
which was promised last
autumn by Mr Fordon in

future remittance has
not with some obstacle.

The time is drawing
near when I shall be
much in want of this
remittance. Could you
find out whether there
is an early chance of
its being paid.

Yours very truly

W. Huskisson

APPENDIX.

No. I.

PROSPECTUS OF THE "JOURNAL DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DE 1789."

[*Referred to in Biographical Memoir, p. 13.*]

5 Juin 1790.

JOURNAL DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DE 1789.

Les arrangemens intérieurs de la Société de 1789 ayant retardé de quelques jours la publication de ce Journal, nous avons cru devoir en remettre le Prospectus sous les yeux des lecteurs.

PROSPECTUS.

Il est, pour les individus, un art d'assurer et d'augmenter leur bonheur : il consiste jusqu'ici dans la philosophie morale, que les anciens portèrent à une sorte de perfection.

Il doit exister aussi, pour les nations, un art de maintenir et d'étendre leur félicité : c'est ce qu'on a nommé l'*art social*.

Cette science, pour laquelle travaillent toutes les autres, ne paraît pas avoir été encore étudiée dans son ensemble. L'art de cultiver, l'art de commercer, l'art de gouverner, l'art de raisonner même, ne sont que des parties de cette science : elles ont pris chacune à part une sorte d'accroissement ; mais, sans doute, ces membres isolés ne parviendront à leur développement complet que lorsqu'ils auront été rapprochés, et qu'ils formeront un corps bien organisé.

Réunir tant de matériaux épars et inconsistans, rechercher dans les sciences économiques leur rapport mutuel, et surtout la liaison commune qu'elles peuvent avoir avec la science générale de la civilisation, tel est l'objet de l'*art social*.

Ce n'est ni un, ni plusieurs hommes, ni même une seule nation, c'est le concert des peuples qui peut assurer à cet art des progrès efficaces ; mais ces progrès seront moins lents, dès que tous les esprits suivront par-tout un ordre de travail constant et uniforme.

Il faut donc créer cette méthode commune. Or, avant qu'elle soit fixée, perfectionnée, et généralement adoptée, il étoit naturel que les bases en fussent posées par une association, qui, communiquant à d'autres sociétés semblables, les principes et l'esprit qui l'animent, pût, ainsi qu'elles, rallier à des systèmes pareils les divers travaux de tous les hommes éclairés, en quelque lieu qu'ils existent, et qu'ils veillent pour le bien de l'humanité.

Tel est le plan sur lequel s'est formée la Société de 1789.

Elle a pensé qu'on avait jusqu'à présent retiré trop peu d'avantages de ces instrumens de communication, par lesquels nous pouvons nous rendre si supérieurs aux anciens ; et qui doivent étendre le commerce de la pensée, comme celui de toutes les autres richesses du globe. Elle a donc voulu multiplier entre les nations les échanges réciproques des connaissances humaines.

C'est pour cela qu'une partie essentielle de son institution est une correspondance suivie avec toutes les sociétés et tous les individus, tant nationaux qu'étrangers, qui voudront coopérer à une si noble entreprise.

Ainsi, la Société de 1789 doit être considérée comme un centre de correspondance pour tous les principes généraux, et non pas comme un foyer de coalition pour des opinions particulières. Ce n'est ni une secte, ni un parti, mais une *compagnie* d'amis des hommes, et, pour ainsi dire, d'*agens* du commerce des vérités sociales.

Développer et répandre les principes d'une constitution libre, est sans doute le premier devoir d'une institution qui date de l'époque de la liberté Française : la Société de 1789 sera fidèle à ce devoir. En même tems que ses travaux se dirigeront vers son principal but, qui est la recherche des principes et des moyens de perfectionnement de l'*art social*, elle consacrera aussi ses veilles à faire une heureuse application de ces principes à la constitution et à la félicité nationale.

Pour remplir ces différentes vues le premier moyen devait être la publication d'un Journal, qui ne fût point une collection de nouvelles, de faits, et de pièces, mis au jour sans choix et sans liaison, à mesure qu'ils se présentent ; mais plutôt un recueil de mémoires sur les divers parties, et sur tout l'ensemble de l'économie sociale, ou même d'observations sur les événemens qui intéressent les principes et les progrès de cette science, ainsi nouvelle qu'elle est étendue.

Le Journal de la Société de 1789 a été conçu dans cette idée. Il sera divisé en cinq chapitres, dont les titres différens indiquent les divers objets : — 1. Art social. 2. Correspondance nationale. 3. Correspondance étrangère. 4. Assemblée Nationale. 5. Variétés.

No. II.

MR. HUSKISSON'S SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE "SOCIÉTÉ DE 1789," AT PARIS, AUGUST 29, 1790, ON PAPER MONEY.

[*Referred to in Biographical Memoir, p. 13.*]

DISCOURS PRONONCÉ PAR M. HUSKISSON,
*Anglois et Membre de la Société de 1789, à la Séance de cette Société,
le 29 Août 1790.*

SUR LES ASSIGNATS.

Pour liquider la dette exigible, qui monte à mille neuf cents millions ; on a proposé à l'Assemblée Nationale :

- 1°. De créer pour deux milliards d'assignats :
- 2°. De mettre en vente les biens nationaux :
- 3°. De ne recevoir en échange de ces biens que ces mêmes assignats.

A l'égard de la seconde proposition, qui a pour objet la vente des biens nationaux ; il paroît que tout le monde est d'accord, qu'il faut s'en défaire de manière ou d'autre ; mais je crois que la méthode proposée dans les parties première et troisième du projet de décret est mauvaise : non-seulement parcequ'elle nécessite une opération inutile ; mais encore parcequ'il en résulteroit des malheurs très-effrayans pour la France. Opération inutile, parceque tous ceux à qui vous donneriez ces assignats en paiement ont déjà des titres de créance sur l'état ; titres que vous avez reconnus sacrés : ainsi, en leur donnant des assignats vous ne feriez que changer la forme des titres.

Les assignats auront, dit-on, deux avantages :

- 1°. Celui d'être des signes uniformes pour tous.
 - 2°. Qu'on pourra acheter, vendre, et transmettre ces signes uniformes beaucoup plus aisément que les différens contrats que possèdent aujourd'hui les créanciers de la dette exigible.
- Le premier avantage est nul, puisqu'il faudroit, pour vérifier et

examiner tous les contrats avant de les convertir en assignats, faire le même travail qu'on feroit avant de les prendre en paiement des domaines nationaux.

Cette reflexion rend même le second avantage beaucoup moins important; car il seroit facile de recevoir les déclarations de tous ceux qui voudroient convertir leurs contrats en biens fonds: à l'égard de ceux qui n'auroient pas cette volonté, ou de ceux à qui l'état devroit des sommes trop petites, je ne vois, à la vérité, d'autre ressource qu'une nouvelle émission d'assignats, mais faite avec des mesures, que je crois indispensables, et que j'indiquerai ci-après.

Jusqu'à présent nous n'avons considéré les assignats que sous un rapport; celui d'un gage nouveau, uniforme à la vérité; mais non pas plus assuré que l'ancien. Maintenant nous allons les envisager sous un autre point de vue; celui de *papier-monnoie*. Ainsi il s'agit à présent d'examiner quelles seroient les conséquences d'une somme aussi énorme de *papier-monnoie* mise tout-à-coup en circulation.

C'est ici que je crois voir les suites les plus alarmantes. En vain le courage et l'habileté de vos législateurs auroient jusqu'ici préservé le vaisseau public du naufrage; je doute que tous leurs efforts pussent le faire échapper à cette nouvelle tempête.

En effet, quand le commerce de la France étoit assez florissant, quand ses manufactures étoient en activité, supposez que, par un hasard quelconque, le numéraire alors en circulation eût été augmenté tout-à-coup de la somme de deux milliards; qu'en seroit-il résulté?—une grande baisse dans le prix de l'argent; c'est-à-dire, il en auroit fallu davantage pour se procurer la même quantité de toutes les autres marchandises; lesquelles, pour parler la langue ordinaire, seroient devenues plus chères. Mais comme les métaux précieux sont des objets de commerce, qui ont une valeur à-peu-près égale dans toute l'Europe; devenus à vil prix en France, toutes les nations se seroient empressées d'en acheter; bientôt le prix des marchandises auroit partout été augmenté, et l'équilibre se seroit rétabli de lui-même.

Ce qui dans cette hypothèse seroit arrivé à l'argent, arriveroit infailliblement au papier-monnoie, avec cette différence, que les assignats ne seroient pas achetés dans les autres pays de l'Europe.

Dans un moment où votre commerce intérieur est très-diminué, où toutes vos manufactures languissent, la France se trouveroit surchargée de papier-monnoie, qui tomberoit nécessairement en non valeur: par consequent toutes les autres marchandises augmenteroient

beaucoup de prix : mais comme l'or et l'argent sont marchandises ; comme ils ont un prix marchand dans tout les pays de l'Europe ; et comme la quantité de ces métaux, ne seroit pas augmentée, ils conserveroient leur prix ; et il faudroit peut-être un assignat de mille livres pour acheter deux cents livres en argent, comme il en faudroit un également de mille livres pour acquérir la même quantité de blé, qui s'achetoit auparavant avec deux cents livres en argent.

C'est ce qui est arrivé en Amérique : et qu'on ne m'objecte pas le grand nombre et la valeur des biens nationaux sur lesquels les assignats seroient hypothéqués ; car on peut véritablement dire, que le papier-monnoie des Américains avoit pour hypothèque tous les biens fonds des Etats-Unis ; puisque pour la plus grande sûreté possible, les citoyens avoient engagé leurs biens particuliers avec les domaines des Etats : c'est aussi ce qui est arrivé à la banque d'*Aire* en Ecosse, pour le succès de laquelle beaucoup de grandes terres de ce pays étoient hypothéquées, et qui a néanmoins failli, quoiqu'elle n'eût pas, à beaucoup près, fait une émission de billets égale à la valeur des biens qui en répondoient. C'est, enfin, ce qui arrive jusqu'à un certain point en France, où un bien fonds de trois milliards n'est encore grevé que d'une hypothèque de quatre cents millions ; et cependant des assignats portant trois pour cent d'intérêt, perdent cinq, et même six pour cent.

Un papier-monnoie n'aura jamais toute la confiance nécessaire, à moins d'être des billets au porteur, qu'on puisse convertir en espèces quand on voudra. Il faut montrer au possesseur d'assignats un gage qu'il puisse avoir à toute heure ; qui, ayant une valeur par lui-même, soit le signe représentatif de toutes les autres richesses, et qui puisse aisément se transmettre d'un bout du royaume à l'autre. Quand vous serez sortis de la crise actuelle, établissez une banque nationale ; et alors un fond en argent de cinquante millions suffiroit peut-être à vous donner un crédit que vous ne pouvez obtenir aujourd'hui avec trois milliards de fonds de terre ; et par lequel vous seriez en état de faire une émission de quatre cents millions d'assignats, qui même, sans porter d'intérêt, se soutiendroient au pair dans la circulation.

Sans m'arrêter davantage à faire voir les conséquences effrayantes d'une si grande émission d'assignats, je me hâterai de finir, en faisant connoître mon opinion sur ce que je crois qu'il faudroit faire.

Il me paroît tres-important, pour des raisons connues de tout le

monde, que les biens nationaux soient mis en vente le plutôt possible : je crois donc que l'Assemblée Nationale devrait décréter :

1°. " Que tous les créanciers de la dette exigible, à qui l'état devrait plus de mille livres, et qui voudroient acquérir des biens nationaux, n'auroient qu'à produire leurs titres de créance, qui seroient reçus dans les ventes comme les assignats actuellement en circulation ; et qu'en attendant que ces nouveaux propriétaires pussent entrer en jouissance de leurs acquisitions, ces titres porteroient, comme les assignats, un intérêt de trois pour cent.

2°. " Qu'il seroit fait une nouvelle émission d'assignats en nombre suffisant ; et en billets depuis cinq cents livres jusqu'à vint-cinq livres, et portant également intérêt à trois pour cent, pour acheter tous les titres de créance qui seroient de moins de mille livres, ou qui appartiendroient à des personnes qui ne voudroient pas les échanger contre des biens nationaux."

Comme la nation seroit toujours prête à reprendre ces assignats en échange des terres, et qu'elle pourroit même leur donner la préférence ; je crois qu'elle peut, sans danger pour la chose publique, accorder cette facilité à ceux qui ne voudroient pas des biens nationaux : les gens riches, et les ci-devant seigneurs, à qui est dû le rachât d'une infinité de petits droits supprimés, seroient bien aises d'être payés en assignats pour acheter des terres : c'est ainsi, je crois, que vous pourriez liquider la dette exigible, et vendre les domaines de l'état, sans courir la risque d'un bouleversement général.

Je n'ajoute plus qu'une reflexion.

On a cru que cette grande émission d'assignats attacherait à la révolution beaucoup de personnes mécontentes, ou qui la voient avec indifférence. On a fait valoir cet argument comme s'il étoit de la plus grande importance. C'est avec un sentiment de douleur que je me suis dit, en lisant cette partie du discours de M. de Mirabeau ; et quoi ! une révolution qui a tiré vingt-quatre millions d'hommes de l'esclavage, pour leur rendre les droits sacrés de la nature, auroit elle besoin d'un appui aussi dangereux ? Non ; je ne puis le croire ; voulez-vous d'ailleurs diminuer le nombre de ces égoïstes agioteurs ? voulez-vous en faire des patriotes ? faites-en des propriétaires : au lieu de tant de droits féodaux, de dixmes, et d'impôts vexatoires, au lieu de ces privilèges, de ces exemptions accordées au hasard par cet amas de sous-despotes, qui ne protégeoient les uns que pour peser plus durement sur les autres, les nouveaux propriétaires n'auront

plus à payer qu'un impôt juste, égal, et modique, dont la perception et l'emploi seront surveillés par eux : que de motifs pour aimer la révolution, pour la défendre comme le plus grand des bienfaits ; que de motifs pour s'attacher à la constitution, comme à l'unique appui de cette égalité dont ils jouissent, et à l'unique sauve-garde de leurs propriétés nouvelles !

THE END.

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